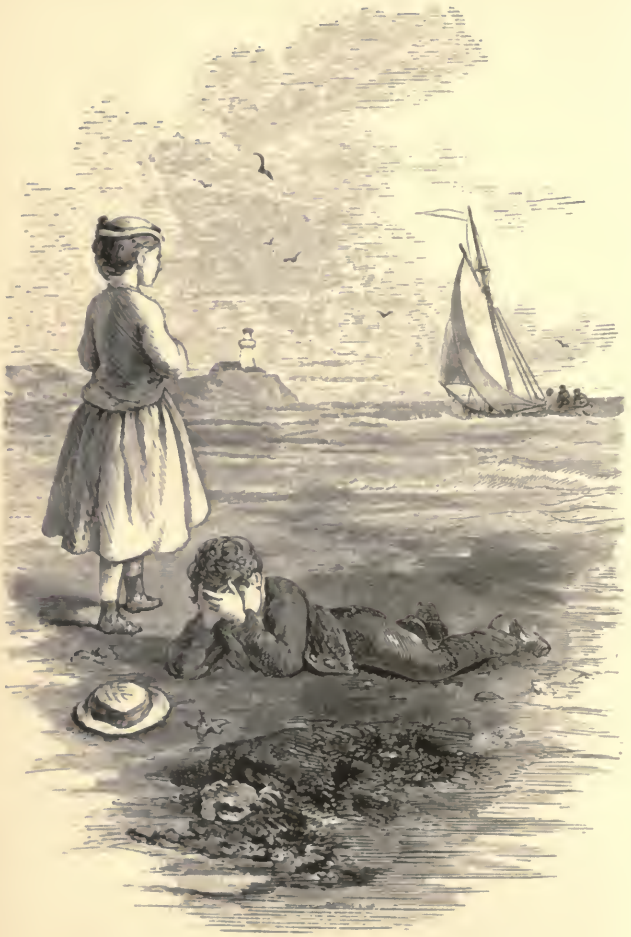

Jack threw himself on the sand. — Page 171.

STRIVING AND GAINING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"KATHERINE MORRIS," "CLIMBING AND SLIDING,"
&c., &c.

"Strive on! Though dark and wild the clouds,
Behind them shines the sun.
Strive on! By steadfast souls alone
Are peace and victory won."

BOSTON:
NICHOLS AND NOYES.
1868.

CAMBRIDGE:
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STRIVING AND GAINING.

CHAPTER I.

HANNAH GORDON'S TRIALS.

THERE was unusual quiet in Mrs. Gordon's nursery, a large square room, whose notched and battered furniture and well-worn carpet gave evidence of the vast amount of youthful spirit and energy that had been exercised upon it. It was a pleasant room, nevertheless, in its aspect, and the windows overlooked the distant hills and gleaming river on one side, and, on the other, houses and shops, and the busy life of a large town.

Hannah Gordon, the eldest daughter and second child of Dr. and Mrs. Gordon, sat at a table, writing a composition, and her earnest attitude and knit brows showed that she was intent upon her task.

All the little Gordons were out, with one honorable exception, who as yet had not been promoted to the nursery. The two boys next in age to Hannah, Jack and Charlie, twelve and ten years old, were at school; Emma and Ellen, seven and five, had gone to visit their Aunt Mary; Sam, whose second birthday was but just over, had gone out for a walk with the nurse; while Walter, a little red-faced mite of humanity but two weeks old, was quietly sleeping beside his mother. Babies were no rarity in Dr. Gordon's household, but they always brought plenty of love in the parents' hearts, and most uproarious demonstrations of joy from Jack and Charlie, increased in the present case by the sex of the new aspirant for love and care.

"Hurrah for the boy baby!" said Jack; "I'm so glad he's a boy."

"Of course," said practical Charlie, "*he's* a boy; you wouldn't have *him* a girl, would you?"

"Well, it, then?"

"Worse and worse. Mamma says it's an insult to call a baby *it*."

"Oh, bother your bettiness! I'm very highly delighted that our respected baby is a boy. Will that suit your dictionaryship? *Now* we'll make the girls step round. Five against three, you know."

"Counting Frank?"

"To be sure, Frank's a boy, isn't he?"

"Why, yes, but then he won't count for any thing in playing and teasing the girls. You know papa calls him Judge half the time."

"Can't help that, — he's a boy all the same, and likes fun occasionally, as well as the rest of us, if he is sixteen years old, and five feet six inches high."

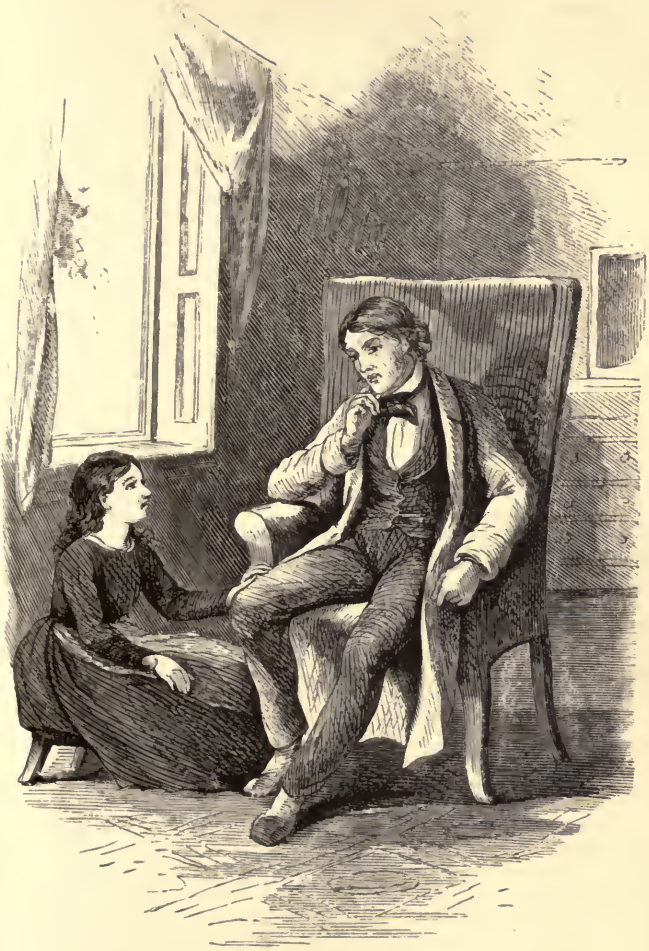
Emma and Ellen were rather disappointed that the new comer was not a girl, as in that case they would have looked forward to future companionship, whilst now, from their experience with their lively brothers, they were disposed to regard the little helpless creature in mamma's bed as some dangerous animal in disguise.

As for Hannah, she had said to her father, with a sigh of resignation, that she supposed

there was no help for it, but she really did hope she shouldn't have any more brothers.

After finishing and neatly folding and marking her composition, Hannah put up her writing materials, locked her desk, and sat down by the broad window-ledge, looking out upon the prospect apparently, but in reality so busy thinking that she paid no heed to the opening door or advancing step, and was only made aware that she was no longer by herself, by hearing her father say in kind tones, "All alone, dear? The house seems so oppressively still, I have been looking for you, and find even my active daughter infected with its unusual quiet."

"Yes, papa: I've been writing my composition, and am tired. Please sit here," offering, as she spoke, the only easy-chair in the room. "No, not there, papa," in answer to a motion from her father to sit upon his knee; "I want to talk and look at you. There, this will do nicely," seating herself on a stool at his feet, and holding one of his hands in both hers.



"There, this will do nicely."—Page 4.

"This *is* pleasant, papa. It's so seldom I have you to myself, and I've been thinking that to-morrow will be my birthday, and that in two years I shall be sixteen."

Doctor Gordon smiled, and said, "What an anxious time of life yours is! By and by you will not be in such haste to look forward two years. You are big enough now, and old enough, to be a great comfort to us, when" —

"When I'm pleasant and happy, I suppose you mean, papa, and not vexed with the others. But Jack does tease me so, and beside — indeed and indeed, papa, I do have my troubles, though I dare say they don't seem such to you."

"I know you do, dear, and I know, too, that the trials of the young are not light to them, however they may appear to others. But let us improve our rare hour of quiet this afternoon, and talk over these same stumbling-blocks in the way of your happiness. Perhaps we shall find, upon inspection, that the mountains are mole-hills, that a little resolute hop-skip of the will can surmount."

"I don't know about that; it would take a perpetual hop-skip to surmount Jack's teasing, for I do believe he keeps it up all the time. He is always calling me madam, and asking me when I am to put on long skirts and wear spectacles. He hides my things, laughs at and mocks my pronunciation, teases me about my hair and ribbons; and worst of all, ever since I wrote part of the original dialogue we had in school, calls me an authoress. Why, only the last time Howard Grey was here, he asked him if he knew that Hannah was an authoress? and when he laughed and said he didn't, Jack told him I was; and that, beside having written several sonnets to cats and birds, I had lately brought out a comedy entitled 'All is not Gold that Glitters.' And Howard laughed so that I couldn't explain, and Jack never told the rest. Were you ever such a tease, papa?"

"I am afraid I must plead guilty to having been a tease, if not *such* a tease as poor Jack," said Dr. Gordon, his blue eyes fairly dancing with mirth, at the remembrance of

some boyish pranks his daughter's question called to mind. "Most boys of life and spirit are such, though I must own that at present teasing seems to be Jack's vocation, and not his pastime. But it is only a vent for his exuberant spirits. He does not mean to be ill-natured or cruel, as he sometimes appears to you. Join him in the laugh at your own expense, or get up, to speak professionally, a counter irritation, by laughing at him in turn."

"I can't always do that, for he *seems* cruel and ill-natured sometimes, if he isn't."

"I know it; but we must judge of the intent of acts by what we know of the general character. Now, I never knew Jack to torment a younger, weaker child than himself, or be cruel to animals; and as for yourself, a warmer-hearted little brother is not to be found than he is. You cannot have forgotten last year's sickness, or how devoted Jack was to you; repressing his noisy mirth, moving lightly for fear of disturbing you, ever ready to run errands in your behalf, anxious to spend his

small allowance of pocket-money for you, and tears even standing in his roguish eyes when told that you were too sick to eat any thing."

"Oh, no, papa; I have not forgotten that indeed, though, to be sure, I do not always remember it at the right time. Perhaps, if I go on, you will smooth away all my difficulties, and really I am almost ashamed to tell you my next grievance, it seems so selfish; and yet I mean to be honest, and I know, papa, you will tell me if it is so. It does seem sometimes as if I never could have any time to myself, I'm so often called off from my work and studies, and, yes," in answer to a look half serious and half quizzical from her father, "my pleasures too. The boys and the little ones are continually wanting some thing done for them, and you know, papa, 'many a little makes a mickle,' and so my time is used up, and then I get cross with them, and afterwards still more cross with myself; so there's a bad state of things generally. Then, another of my troubles is, and this I know you will think the most foolish thing of all for

me to care about, my dress, and that some of the girls treat me coldly because I wear plain clothes, and because we are not rich. There, it's all out now; I mean all the mountains; there are lots of little mole-hills beside. I hope you love me enough, papa, not to think I am very weak."

"I love you very dearly, my child, and I can understand in a degree why these things, really so unimportant in themselves, trouble and annoy you at your sensitive age and with your keen feelings. Let us consider separately these trials of yours. I believe Jack's teasing is disposed of; isn't it? — that is to say, the ill-natured aspect of it is removed, which made it so hard to be borne?"

"Yes, papa: I suppose I must call it a mole-hill now, though it's a pretty large one."

"Very well, then, the numerous calls upon your time comes next upon your list, and to me this seems really the highest of your mountains, while it is almost unavoidable that it should be so, as you are the eldest daughter, and the one to whom, next to your

mother, the younger ones naturally look for help and counsel. I need not tell you, what you so well know, that it is a pleasure to help others, or to remind you of the Saviour whose life and death has taught us all the exceeding loveliness of self-sacrifice. I can give you no other rule in this matter than the simple one that, when calls upon you interfere with positive duties that cannot be postponed, or needed recreation, you must give your reasons for not responding to them, in a spirit that will leave no doubt upon the minds of the little petitioners of your readiness to aid them. And an offset to these demands upon you may be found in the knowledge that you are helping your mother, already, from the delicate state of her health, so much over-taxed in this noisy household of ours."

"I never forget that, papa, and that is why, or one reason why, I am so vexed with myself for being impatient with the other children."

"Well, Hannah, my dear, if that is the case, you are in a fair way to lessen the grievance.

If you thought yourself justified in being unkind and disobliging, I should not easily know where to find a remedy for you; as it is, I think I can safely leave the matter to your conscience.

"And now for the third trouble I hardly know what to say. Here, at least, your mother would be a wiser counsellor for you, as I attach so very little importance to dress, if it is neat and becoming, and am not versed in the feminine estimate of its consequence. Don't look disappointed, dear. I dare say it is a real grievance to you. I only say I cannot understand about it; still less why you should care for the warmth or the coldness of girls who value you by the richness of your clothes, or the amount of your father's income.

"'A man's a man for a' that, and a' that,' and so is a girl a girl, &c., and my big daughter, who will 'be sixteen in two years,' knows that it is character, and not the 'guinea stamp,' that makes the person. Very likely, too, half the coldness you speak of is

fancied. Two or three purse-proud girls, with no real appreciation of that which entitles another to consideration and respect, treat you coldly, because their dress is of finer texture or more costly material than yours, and you take it for granted that all who are richer than yourself share the feeling, — most unjustly too; for your dearest friend, Helen Ashton, is not only the daughter of one of our richest, but also one of our most Christian and most highly educated, men."

"Oh, Helen is a girl almost by herself. She is so noble and generous in every thing she thinks or does. I don't believe, papa, she ever did a mean thing in her life!"

"I believe your friend is all you say, Hannah, for she has an inheritance of nobility of nature; still I doubt not there are others who, if less noble than Helen, are far less narrow-minded than you think them. And even if they are not so, you surely have friends enough without caring for the notice of those whose standard of worth is based merely upon money."

"It isn't for myself only that I care, papa; for of course no one dares to be very rude to Dr. Gordon's daughter if he isn't rich; but they are some of them so cruel to Lydia Harris. You know she is trying to get an education, so that she can be a teacher; and it so happens that all the girls in her class are in a different position in society from herself,—and they do treat her shamefully sometimes. It was only the other day we had an example in arithmetic about measurement, and Lydia was the only one that had a perfectly correct answer, and Eva Barton said, of course she would be familiar with such examples, as her father is a carpenter."

"Well, my dear, I hope she is not ashamed of that fact, as I know few more worthy and really refined men than Mr. Harris."

"No, indeed: not she; but Eva *meant* it unkindly, and that was the reason it disturbed her."

"Well, my dear, I can only advise you and Lydia, and all young or old, who are tried as many now are by the varying fortunes

and unsettled state of society in this country, to stand firm upon a proper self-respect, neither imagining slights that do not exist, nor over-estimating their importance when they do, and always to remember that, sooner or later, character tells in a community, — even the character of a child. But yonder are the boys rushing homewards as if fearful that we are suffering from the interval of quiet we have enjoyed so much. I hope I have given you a little comfort, my darling; but the truth is, we most of us, big and little, have to solve these hard problems of life for ourselves, or else what is far better, lean in faith on Him who is able to guide us in all our ways. If I have only given you a little help towards that, I shall be glad. Ah, what now, Jack? have you forgotten so soon that Dr. Gordon said there must be no noise in the house?".

CHAPTER II.

HANNAH'S PLEASURES.

"OH, I did forget, papa, I keep forgetting all the time about our new boy. Is it because his ears are so little that a noise hurts him? I hope he'll hurry up and grow so that he can play with us. Why, Sam is learning to play ball. The trouble is, he's so fat and shaky, and throws the ball so hard, that he usually goes over with it. It's jolly fun to see him scrabble up and try it again. How are *you*, Miss Gordon? Beg your pardon for not seeing you. Have you been engaged in literary labors? Oh, yes: I see the ink-spots on your fingers. You ought to give Howard Grey a poem to carry back with him to school, so that the people abroad may know what a poetess Wellwood can boast."

All this was rattled off by Jack in answer

to his father's question. Dr. Gordon and Hannah exchanged looks, and smiled at this speedy confirmation of the latter's statement, but neither noticed it in any other way. Hannah only thought how foolish she had been ever to care for such nonsense, and to more than half suspect that she *had* made mountains out of mole-hills.

"Now, boys," said Dr. Gordon, "run out in the garden, and work or play awhile. I'm going for the little ones, and Hannah with me, so I must put you upon your honor to be quiet. Run, boys, run; and run, Hannah, and get ready."

To hurry up-stairs, knock softly at her mother's door to let her know where she was going, put on her outside garments, and run down again to her father, was the work of very few moments; for Dr. Gordon, himself one of the busiest of men, had taught his children that promptness and despatch insured them many a favor that idling and delay would forfeit. One spring, and Hannah was beside her father, and Derby

was off in a swift trot in the direction of Aunt Mary's.

A warm welcome from her aunt, and the loving little sisters who had been away from home a week, greeted her. "How's baby? has he growed any, Hanny?" asked Emma, while Ella lisped, "Has he dot a name, and is he 'eal dood?"

"Yes, pets: he has grown, and his name is Walter, and he is real good and sweet and lovely. Come, hurry, little ones; Dr. Gordon is waiting to go and see a poor sick woman, and we mustn't keep him."

"Oh, dear," said Emma, "I thought Papa Gordon was coming for us. I do hope he will be at home to-night to kiss us good-night and have a frolic."

"'Es," echoed Ella, "dood night, tiss papa."

"You shall have the kisses now, darlings, with compound interest, and the frolic too," taking up first one and then another, and covering the little, soft, rosy faces with kisses.

"'At'll do, papa," said the little one, "ou picks Ella."

"Saucy one! — Come, kiss auntie, and we'll be off."

"Any grist for the mill?"

"Oh, yes, 'two bags full;' one for mamma and one for papa;" and, throwing a child over each shoulder, Dr. Gordon made his exit from the house, amid the laughter of Aunt Mary and Hannah, and the screams of delight of Emma and Ella.

"I declare," he exclaimed, panting as if excessively fatigued, as he put the children into the chaise, after Hannah, "what a heavy grist! Step along, Derby, at your best pace."

Arrived at home, he said, "Tell mamma I couldn't stop, as old Mrs. Blake is sick, and the ride is long; and give me one more good-night kiss, little ones, as I shall not be at home till the little curtains are shut over your eyes."

"But who'll hear our prayers then, papa, if mamma is sick?" asked Emma, anxiously.

"God always hears your prayers, dear, and Hannah will come up to you as mamma used to do. Send Jack and Charlie out to me, Hannah, and don't wait tea too long, though

I'll try and be back by seven. Here, boys, I want you to eat your supper to-night with the little ones, as I shall be late, and then you may take your books, and sit down quietly to read. And, mind, don't betray any of to-morrow's surprises."

"Oh, must we, papa?" in the first breath, and then, "Well, if you wish it," and "No, indeed," in the second, were the words sounding in Dr. Gordon's ears, as he drove off, saying to himself, "Good boys on the whole; good children, all of them; plenty of faults, and the material for plenty of virtues. The ground where weeds won't grow isn't worth cultivating. All we have to do is to root them out as fast as they appear, and then put in the wheat and flowers."

Hannah's conversation with her father had given her a brighter view of her life than she was apt to have, and had also determined her to try to bear with patience the demands made upon her by the younger children. But it was far from easy to put her good resolutions in practice that very night, when a heavy de-

mand was made upon her. Perhaps older persons than Hannah have found that the moment of exhilaration after making a good resolution is not the most favorable for putting it in practice. However that may be, it certainly never was more difficult for Hannah to bear the noise of the boys, the almost ceaseless questions of the little ones, and the confusion consequent thereupon, than it was that evening, two hours or less after her firm resolutions upon the subject. Bear it she did, however, bravely, and she found the victory worth the struggle it cost her, in the consciousness of having done right. She remembered, too, that she had often heard her father say, that youthful spirits were like the steam in a tea-kettle: let it sing merrily at spout and cover, and no harm is done; but stop them up, and an explosion is sure to follow, which does harm to more than the poor kettle.

So, although Jack choked two or three times in his efforts to suppress a laugh upon some subject that seemed to divert him greatly, while Charlie somewhat loudly remonstrated

with him, and Emma and Ella laughed and prattled quite beyond ordinary supper rules, she didn't lose her patience or temper, but kindly strove to keep the din within bounds as much as possible.

The meal was over at last, the boys took their books and sat by the table to read as their father had requested, and Hannah went up-stairs with her little sisters, and in hearing their simple prayers and the sweet childish prattle that followed found herself soothed and rested. Then she had a quiet half-hour with her mother, while the nurse went below to prepare her tea; and after that were the few finishing touches to be put to the sitting-room, which was also the dining-room and library, to make every thing bright and cheery for her tired father when he should return home.

These duties attended to, she sat waiting for her father, and was soon rewarded by hearing Derby's quick trot on the drive, and a moment after her father came in.

"Here I am, Hannah. I'll run up to see mamma a moment, and meantime please tell

Bridget to bring in tea, — some cold meat too, if there is any. My drive and the cold east wind have given me a fearful appetite."

"Two great and rare privileges in one day," thought Hannah, after she had carefully waited upon her father at the tea-table. "A nice quiet chat with papa, and tea with him too, all by ourselves."

"I've been thinking, papa, while I was waiting for you and resting," she said, after the boys had gone to bed and they were once more left to themselves, "that my privileges and my pleasures are far greater and more than my troubles."

"Why, yes, dear: I should hope so, as, in case you had not made the discovery, I should call you a most unreasonable little woman. This bright and pleasant if not luxurious home; the fond love of your parents; the affection of your brothers and sisters; the lively mirth of the younger ones, whose noise and prattle give so much life to the household, and an added value to rare hours of quiet; the keen enjoyment which an active, intelli-

gent young mind takes in study; the companionship of a dear friend; a pleasant if not very large circle of acquaintance; and above and beyond all these, because himself cause and centre of all, the love and protecting care of the Heavenly Father: all this, and, beside all this, the privilege of ministering to others, thereby following the example of Him who came on earth, not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

"Yes, papa: I am just beginning to realize that the power to do for others is a pleasure, but I cannot quite seem to feel as if God cared for *me*."

"And yet we are told that he careth for the lilies of the field, and the birds of the air. How much more, then, for us, beings with immortal souls, whom his own will has created! Never doubt *that*, child, even if you cannot fully grasp the idea of your Heavenly Father's all-embracing love. Fully grasp it, you never can here; but you can form some idea of it by what you know of an earthly parent's love, which is always deep enough for

the largest demands made upon it. How much greater, then, your Heavenly Father's! Think of this, dear, when your mind falters in the vain attempt to measure the all-pervading love of the Father, and think, too, of all the free gifts he has showered down upon the humblest and lowest of his children, — life, home, friends; the fair world teeming with beauty and splendor, abounding in every thing that can comfort the heart and gladden the eye."

"Sometimes, papa, I can feel that it is as you say, and that God is near even to me, but oftener I wonder how he can care for every one of us, and then I get puzzled."

"Then try and speculate as little as possible upon a subject which puzzles you. The Saviour has revealed God to us as a tender, loving, and just Father, and as such let us love and worship him. And one thing we must all bear in mind, that whoever would know of the Father must do his will. Doing his will will bring us near to him, far nearer than idle attempts to fathom an infinite with our finite nature."

CHAPTER III.

HANNAH'S BIRTHDAY.

THE sun shone brightly, the air was soft and balmy, on the morning of Hannah Gordon's fourteenth birthday. Within was the early stir of busy little feet and the sound of merry voices, while soap and water, combs and brushes, were called into requisition, to make rosy cheeks still more rosy, and smooth, tangled locks. Without, the grass gleamed with its freshest verdure, gardens and orchards were one mass of bloom from apple, pear, and peach trees, while the ground was white with the parting benediction of falling cherry blossoms, and the birds were singing their morning hymn of praise and joy in their loudest, fullest notes.

Hannah stood several minutes at her open window, looking out upon the lovely scene, her heart swelling with grateful emotions, and sending up silent prayer to the Giver of all

good and beauty; for to Dr. Gordon's children the worship and love of the Heavenly Father was not confined to set times and seasons, although such were always observed. They had been taught from their earliest childhood, that is, as soon as their minds were capable of receiving impressions of love and care, to associate the idea of God with all their blessings and pleasures, and to render to him the simple homage of loving and reverent hearts. And on this beautiful morning, the beginning of a new year of life and hope and anticipation, Hannah no longer felt any difficulty in realizing the nearness of her Heavenly Father, or his care and love for her.

"Yes," she said softly: "the heavens rejoice, the earth is glad, the field is joyful, and all the trees of the wood rejoice. How much more, then, should I, who have so much, so very much, to be grateful for!"

When the family met soon after the morning-prayers, the jubilant spirit of praise that animated all hearts found fitting response in the one hundred and fourth psalm, selected

by Dr. Gordon for the morning reading, beginning, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty."

The few words of comment upon the reading, which he was in the habit of making, were so simple and clear that the youngest child could either learn a direct lesson from it, or at least catch its spirit.

This service over, Hannah was almost deafened with the wishes of "Happy birthday" from all the children, after which they trooped into breakfast in the finest spirits imaginable, without one of the number (as was sometimes the case) being out of temper or even fretful.

"Charlie," said his father, when breakfast was over, "run up to mamma, with papa's compliments, and say that we shall be happy to pay her a visit as soon as convenient, and stay, just whisper in Mrs. Blake's ear to make haste, for Dr. Gordon has a great deal to do this morning, and must be off early on his rounds."

"What! all ready so soon?" as Charlie came

back, two stairs at a time, almost immediately, to report that mamma, with her love, would be happy to receive visitors at once: "Come, Hannah and little ones, follow in order of age, except Sam, who is to have his favorite perch on papa's shoulder."

"Here we are, mamma, at your service, a goodly company of us, if I do say it, who shouldn't? Bless me, has the prince got his eyes open in honor of the occasion?" The baby in the family had always been called the prince by the doctor, because, he said, the youngest was always the ruler of mamma, and, through her, of the rest.

Mrs. Gordon was sitting up in her bed, propped up with pillows, the flush on her cheeks rivalling the color of the ribbons on her cap; and after a kiss from all the children she said, "Jack, if you haven't exploded before this time, you shall be rewarded with taking the cloth off this little table."

"No, indeed, all right and tight. I've kept the steam in; only laughed and choked a little now and then, as a safety-valve. Off comes

the cloth, and appears — gifts for Miss Gordon!"

"Oh, how beautiful, this vase and these flowers, from you, mamma? I know you painted the vase. Work-box from Aunt Mary, with love; oh, oh, box filled with drawing materials, colored crayons and all; oh, papa!" and here Hannah broke down in a little laugh, which ended in a sob; and Jack took up the word, and went on, "And a photograph in a frame, to hang up, of Frank Gordon, Esq., otherwise Judge Gordon, and letter from the same; also a graduated ruler from Charlie; also a box of colored silks and a spool-bag from Emma and Ella; also a big sugar heart (which he would very much like to eat himself), from Sam; also a box of candy from Prince Walter; also this from — I declare there's never a label on it. Perhaps Howard Grey sent it." "This" proved to be two photographs in a frame, made to fold together, — one representing a young lady in the extreme of the fashion; the other a thin, lank, spectacled young woman, with a book in her

hand; the first labelled matter, the second mind. Hannah's countenance fell for a moment, but, rallying herself directly, she joined in her father's hearty laugh, and asked, "Which shall I take for my model, Jack?"

"Neither, unless you prefer them to this, that I heard you say one day was the desire of your heart," said Jack, producing, from under mamma's pillow, "Evangeline."

"And you have saved up your money to get this for me, you good, naughty Jack! And it has a companion-frame to Frank's picture. Ah, Jack, Jack! How shall I thank you all?"

"Don't try to do it, I beg," said her father, "unless you wish to see my longest professional face, for I can't wait five minutes."

"And I'm tired, and baby wants his bath," said Mrs. Gordon, "so please a kiss all round for mamma, and then be off all of you, except Hannah, who may wait to clear off my table, so encumbered with her possessions."

"A fair challenge," said Dr. Gordon, "and one to which I most heartily respond; now, children, follow suit, and follow me."

"But mamma didn't mean you," said Emma; "she meant us children."

"Very well, she should state her meaning more distinctly then. Good-by. Oh! I invite you all, mamma and prince and the rest, to meet me on the front piazza this afternoon at four o'clock."

"How funny," said Emma, "when he knows neither mamma nor baby *can* come!"

With a light step and happy heart Hannah went to school that morning, and acquitted herself with her usual faithfulness in her studies, notwithstanding the strong temptation there was for her busy mind to wander to her birthday gifts, and to the afternoon's surprise in store for her. Dinner was on the table when she came home from school, and her father had not returned; so she found abundant calls upon her time in attending to the children, whose spirits were still somewhat of the liveliest order.

"What can papa want of us this afternoon?" said Charlie. "I guess it is only to see Hannah start off for a drive with him."

"Papa never would cheat us *so*," said Emma, indignantly.

"Cheat! — who said any thing about cheating, little one?" inquired Jack, patronizingly.

"Charlie said just the same, for papa knows we all expect something pleasant, and if we don't have it, we shall be sorry and disappointed."

"Oh, it wasn't pleasant then to see Hannah receive her presents this morning," pursued her tormentor.

"That was quite different, and you *know* it, Jack," said Emma, very surely and positively.

"True for you" was the answer; "now I guess we're all to have a walk in the woods."

"And I," said Emma, "that papa will get a carryall, and take us out."

"It surely will be a *carryall* if it takes all: what do you think, Hannah?"

"Who? I? Oh, I think it is excellent! when did he have it taken?"

This not exactly appropriate reply elicited shouts of laughter from the rest, and the exclamation from Jack, "Don't disturb her, she's

composing a poem, or thinking of Howard Grey's tintype which I saw this morning in her album."

"For shame, Jack!" said Hannah, half laughing, half inclined to be vexed, "I was thinking of Frank's photograph."

"I dess," said Ella, speaking quite loud, as if determined upon proving her right to a voice in the matter, "that we's all to have a lot of tandy and sugar-plums."

This "guess" was received with another shout, which Ella was at a loss whether to join in, or cry about, but finally mirth proved contagious, and her voice joined the rest, while Charlie remarked, in his usual grave manner, that he didn't think papa would call them all out on the piazza for that purpose.

"I suppose," said Hannah, rising, "that four o'clock will decide the question; and now, boys, it is time for you to be off to school. I'm going to sit with mamma awhile, and then I'll come to the nursery to see you," turning towards the little girls, who were eagerly looking up at her.

It was three o'clock before Hannah found leisure to go to her own room. Then she had a history-lesson to learn, to put on, at her mother's request, her pretty blue dress, as Aunt Maria was expected to tea, — and then, surely then, she had a few spare moments in which to look over her new treasures; and in this pleasure she became so absorbed, that the hall-clock struck four without her hearing it, and she was only recalled to a sense of the time by hearing Jack's flying step on the stairs, and his voice saying, "Hannah, where are you? Papa sends his compliments, and says the coach is waiting. Oh, it's *so* jolly! why didn't you come down?"

"I will be down almost as soon as you are," snatching up, as she spoke, her sack and hat.

"One, two, buckle my shoe,
Three, four, open the door,"

shouted Jack, throwing wide the door, and displaying to Hannah's view a handsome barouche with two silver-gray horses before the piazza, her father walking back and forth, and

the children all dressed for a drive, running, laughing, and talking, in the highest glee.

"Shall I have the pleasure, Miss Gordon, of taking you out for a drive? Jump in first. Here goes," said Dr. Gordon, piling in one after the other.

"Everybody in there make room for every body else and for papa. Here, Jack, up with you beside the driver. Now, Mr. Carter," to the colored man who sat on the box, reins in hand, displaying his teeth to the children, as they looked up at him with gleeful faces, "give us an hour's drive out into the real country, over the old turnpike, and back by the sea-shore. We want a good look at the orchards on Pleasant Hill, where we shall have acres instead of rods of blossoms and greenness. Bless me, Ella!

"There was an old woman who lived in a shoe,
And she had so many children she didn't know what to do."

That's fast getting to be my case, I'm afraid. Now be sure and enjoy yourselves, don't be afraid to laugh and talk, provided you don't frighten the horses."

"Such a needful injunction, the first, papa," said Hannah. "One would think it was all the Gordons' birthday from the spirits they have."

"Oh, how dood it is!" said Ella, sliding down from Hannah's lap, and jumping up and down clapping her little hands in the overflowing of her cup of joy.

"Yes, darling," said Dr. Gordon: "you have got the right word. 'And God looked upon every thing that he had made, and behold it was good.' *That* we can all understand, and *that* we can all strive to be, — good. Do you know, Hannah, how much that little word of four letters, which a person who aimed at fine writing would despise, means? what a host of meanings it has, rather, so that, in reality, one half-hour's circumlocution and exhaustion of fine phrases could not have expressed what we are looking upon and enjoying, as this little one of our Heavenly Father's has unconsciously done in her one word?"

"No, papa: I do not think I know quite all its meanings: I never thought about it before in that way."

"Look it up, then, sometime; and you too, Charlie, who are all ready to argue the point. Another time will do. Never undertake to combat till your weapons are all sharp, and fit for use."

Yes, it was good, all of it: the easy motion of the pleasant carriage, as the horses, with arched necks and prancing feet, drew them swiftly over the level road through the town by its stately or humble homes, almost every one of which had its garden with fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs, and flowers, over the open marsh, through which the turnpike ran; then up a gradual ascent to a more hilly region, past pleasant rural homes and quiet farms, riding through and looking down upon fields of pink and white blossoms so abounding as to conceal the foliage, while their beauty was enhanced by the rich verdure of the grass beneath. It was good, leaving this rich fulness of beauty of the blossoming time, to go down again to the quiet valley, and strike off to the shore-road, from whence could be seen the bay, its blue waters sparkling and leaping

as if they too rejoiced in this rarely beautiful spring-day.

It was good to see the wild exuberance of the children's spirits gradually toned down to a more quiet, but not less full happiness as they looked eagerly out upon the broad expanse of water, an unfamiliar sight to them, but one which never failed to elicit their admiration and delight.

It was good to look at Dr. Gordon in this, one of his very rare intervals of leisure, to see his blue eyes sparkling with sympathetic mirth and pleasure as he looked from one happy, beaming face to another, always finally resting upon Hannah, between whom and himself was even more than the ordinary love of father and daughter.

When the happy party reached home, they were met by Aunt Mary and Aunt Maria, the former Mrs. Gordon's, the latter Dr. Gordon's, sister.

They had an early tea, in which all the children were allowed to join, and over which Hannah presided. The birthday cake was

cut, and pronounced excellent, and Hannah received from her Aunt Maria a hair bracelet with gold clasps.

Dr. Gordon smiled as it was presented, and said, "I thought so."

"Yes, I meant the poor child should have something ornamental to wear. I hope you don't object, Frank."

"Not I. I am glad to see my little girl gratified. I was only thinking how sure I felt that you would give her something of the sort. I don't object to such gifts if they are not too rich or abundant for a poor hard-working doctor's daughter; only I never should think of buying them. I don't miss them when they are not worn; but I do miss the absence of them, when I see girls or women bedizened out with enough jewellery to stock a travelling pedler."

Mrs. Maria Howard glanced at her own rich set of gold and black enamel, and her heavy watch-chain, but said nothing; and her brother laughingly added, "I meant nothing personal, Maria: your taste is too good to suffer you

to be included in the class of walking exhibitors of jewelry. There's the bell. I hope it isn't professional."

Jack, who had answered its summons, came back breathless to announce "Helen Ashton, Lydia Harris, Howard and Annie Grey, cousins Will and Lucy Howard, and a lot more, Hannah."

The "lot more" proved but three, but these were quite enough to give them all a most merry evening, Jack occasionally being checked by his father when his spirits were too uproarious, with "Softly, softly, my boy, remember mamma and the prince up-stairs."

When all had gone home, and the boys had said their last "good-night," Hannah lingered a moment to say, "O papa! what *must* you have thought of me, what *do* you think of me, to complain of my trials, when I have so much to be thankful for, so much to make me happy?"

"Think, my dear child! why, nothing but that you are pretty much like the rest of the world, in that you are more apt to look at your

trials than your blessings. A good plan for you would be, if you find yourself again falling into a desponding state, to make notes for an entire week of your troubles and also of your pleasures, and see how the balance stands at the end. I tried that plan once, and I own I was astonished at the result."

"Do you mean for me to put down what *I* call troubles, or only what every one would allow to be such?"

"Oh! certainly what you call troubles, provided you will also fairly state, on the other side, your blessings. But there is one thing, dear, you must always remember in the effect your estimates have upon you, and that is, that we are nowhere promised, either in lessons drawn from the Saviour's life or teachings, ease or self-indulgence. If we are to be happy in this world, the Bible does not encourage us to hope to find it in that way. No, no, child, there is a higher life than that. Blessed are they, young or old, who early find it."

By such timely words of instruction this

good man and father strove to cherish and increase in his children's hearts love and reverence for Christ the Saviour, and God the Heavenly Father. And his influence had more power because he was in himself a remarkable combination of the most patient and untiring love, with the strictest justice and most rigid adherence to duty.

Out of these traits had arisen a habit in Frank, in his younger days, of calling his father Dr. or Papa Gordon; Dr. Gordon when he saw that he was intent upon his professional or other cares, and Papa Gordon when he was free to unbend in his family. This habit had naturally been followed by the others, and was understood by all their intimate friends.

CHAPTER IV.

EVA BARTON'S PARTY.

"I DO believe, Helen, that I am c-r-o-s-s to-day," said Hannah Gordon to her friend, one morning about two weeks after her birthday, as they walked to school together; "and, moreover, I am afraid that this is going to be a Rosamond week of misfortunes and vexations. Sunday morning I got up with a headache, mamma's nurse had gone, and I felt that I must do all that I could to lighten her cares. Jack was more full of mischief than ever; though, when he found that my head ached, he did help me by taking care of Sam, who can't get used at once to being turned off by mamma and the nurse too. Well, after a morning of confusion, I went to Sunday school, and couldn't answer the very first question Mr. Grey asked me, which, of course, made

me feel mortified enough, as I was sure that I had learned my lesson. When I got home, I found mamma looking pale and tired, holding Ella, who had hurt her head by a fall; so I took her in my lap, and told her stories, which didn't help my head any.

"It was pretty much the same all day, and two or three times I spoke very impatiently to the children, and twice I caught papa's eyes fixed upon me, with that grave look of his, which is as great a punishment to me as I ever need for any thing.

"Yesterday my head was all right again, but I wasn't in the house ten minutes, except the hour after dinner, when I locked my door, that it wasn't 'Do, Hannah, show me how to do this,' or, 'Please, Hannah, do that for me,' and so on. Then I tore my school-dress, and had to take half of my walking-time to mend that. This morning my history-lesson is half learned because I overslept myself, and my composition for to-morrow is not touched. And last, but I am afraid not least, is Eva Barton's party for Friday. I haven't nice

things to wear like the other girls, who are, most of them at least, to have new dresses, and will stay till twelve. Mamma says I may go if I am willing to wear my white muslin, and come home at ten o'clock."

"You have a lot of troubles, to be sure, Hannah," said Helen, laughing. "Most of Sunday's and Monday's may be set down to the headache and its consequences, and a little tendency you have to looking on the dark side of things as if that side was always to be uppermost. As for the party, I shall not have any thing new. I mean to wear white, and pink ribbons. You must wear your pretty white dress, with blue on your neck and hair."

"Yes, of course, I *must* wear it, but all the girls know it is my only company-dress, and have seen it again and again."

"If you feel so badly about it, Hannah, I would stay at home."

"The very thing I don't want to do."

"Well, Hannah, if you *don't* want to go, and *do* want to go, I don't see how I can help you to decide. You must balance the fors

and againsts, and see which is likely to be the winning side."

"There! that reminds me what a capital time it will be for me to keep my promise to papa that I told you about,—when I had an uncommonly trying week, to put down my trials on one list, and my blessings on another, and see how the balance comes out. I'll do it, this very week. What with this party, my head, and the slightly irregular state of our domestic affairs, I'm likely to have plenty of items for one side; and—yes, I mean to be honest—I dare say there will be a good many on the other that I don't remember when I'm vexed or troubled."

"And as to your dress for the party, Hannah, I wouldn't let that trouble me."

"Excellent advice, that, Miss Ashton; very well for you to talk, when you can have any thing you like to wear, and the girls all know it."

"No, Hannah, I could not have every thing I liked to wear if I cared for a great deal; for both my father and mother disapprove

of the present extravagant mode of dress prevailing amongst young girls, and would never allow me to have very expensive clothes if I wanted them. My best dress is that blue and white check silk; and I never, as you well know, wear any thing to school but plaids and merinos, plainly made, in winter, and calicoes and ginghams in summer."

"Well, but you *won't* see the difference. You can afford to have handsome things, and the girls all know it, while I" —

"While you, silly little goose that you are, care too much what 'the girls' say and do. It's like the everlasting 'they' of fashionable life. Now, Hannah, I can't have this nonsense. I'm older than you are by a whole year, taller by two inches, wiser by that increased age and height, beside being, as you've told me hundreds of times, your very best friend,— consequently, in virtue of all these advantages and superiorities, I am going to give you a little lecture."

"It's got to be short, as here we are at school."

"Plenty of time for the three divisions of my discourse, which are, first, you are too sensitive, Hannah Gordon, to your own opinion of yourself; secondly, you are too sensitive, Hannah Gordon, to your friends' opinion of you; thirdly, you are too sensitive, Hannah Gordon, to 'the girls'' opinion of you. Not a word: we've only time to hang up our hats, and go into school; another time, if you wish, I'll enlarge and explain."

"Too sensitive, too sensitive," thought Hannah, as she mechanically took her seat, "perhaps I am; I'll think it over." And think it over she did, somewhat to the detriment of her lessons; for twice her teacher reproved her for inattention. When recess came, she walked off by herself to a quiet spot, and soliloquized after this fashion:—

"'Too sensitive to my own opinion of myself.' I believe that is true; for Aunt Mary says I have got into a bad habit of analyzing myself, and dwelling morbidly upon my deficiencies."

"'Too sensitive to my friends' opinion of

me.' That is true also; for I am positively unhappy if I read disapprobation in the expression only of any one whom I love, and that, too, when I feel that I have done right. After all, though Helen didn't say it, I know she meant this was only a plausible cover to love of approbation. 'Too sensitive to the opinion of the girls.' That is the *truest* of all the trues; for, in reality, I do not care whether my dress is silk or muslin (except that I think muslin really the prettiest for young girls), if it were not for what 'the girls' say and think about it. I'll go to the party, have a good time while I do stay, and try not to think of my clothes. Thank you, Helen," as the latter appeared in search of her; "I've enlarged upon and explained your lecture myself, and I mean to try and not be a goose any more."

"A wise resolution, Hannah, and now I want you to see if you haven't enough pieces of muslin to make a broad sash like mine. I know you have blue ribbon to bind it with, for I saw some in your 'fancy drawer' the

other day. In case you have, and your mamma is willing, let me make the sash for you. I have more time at home than you can possibly have, this 'Rosamond week.'"

"Perhaps the trial part of it is over, and I shall be able to imitate Rosamond in her better moods. I suppose it is treason, Helen, but I like Rosamond a great deal better than Laura. I can't bear your dreadful good girls, who never do wrong, nor make a mistake. Rosamond was good at heart, and never did wrong with, as Mr. Percy would say, malice aforethought. Even you, Helen, get vexed sometimes, and do things you are sorry for."

Helen laughed at Hannah's earnestness to prove her fallibility, and said, "I am grateful to you for that admission. I was really afraid that I was one of 'the dreadful good girls' you seem to dislike so much."

But the Rosamond week was not ended. Hannah was tired, a little overworked, and a good deal out of sorts generally. Nothing went very smoothly with her; consequently the little jars and annoyances, which Wednes-

day and Thursday, like most days of the week, brought with them, were magnified into real causes of trouble. Friday morning, she got up feeling better and happier than she had done any previous day in the week; and six o'clock came and found her ready for Eva Barton's party, satisfied with her appearance, and with everybody and every thing.

"She really does look very pretty," said Mrs. Gordon to her husband, as Hannah left the nursery where she had been to kiss the little ones good-night.

"Yes," said Dr. Gordon, "the best kind of pretty too; she has, when she is happy, such a bright, pleasant face, and honest look,—and I don't know much about gowns, you know; but it seems to me that white and blue combination is very becoming to her, quite airy and cloudlike. What do you call the streamers at her side, that floated out so prettily as she danced out of the room?"

"Oh! her sash you mean, I suppose. I thought you never noticed dress."

"There you mistake, my dear Madam Gor-

don. I notice it in two ways,—when it is simple and becoming, and when it is overdone and hideous. I always know what I like and what I don't like, though I couldn't tell you the names of different articles of wearing apparel, as I could the ingredients of the mixture of which you partook this morning. I hope Hannah will keep her bright face on till I call for her to-night."

"I hope so too," said Mrs. Gordon, "and I think she will, if those foolish girls who attach so much importance to fine clothes do not make any disparaging remarks in her hearing."

It was not all the partial view of fond parents that saw that evening in Hannah Gordon a far prettier girl than many who had really more beauty and much richer attire. There was something very attractive in her bright face and, as her father rightly expressed it, "honest look;" and her manners were simple and natural, with no affected airs or languid graces. She appeared just as she was, and what in the present hot-house sys-

tem which prevails in most families one rarely sees,—a young girl enjoying the pleasures and pastimes suited to her age, without an attempt or wish to ape the manners of grown-up young ladyhood. She joined in the games and dancing upon the lawn, partook with the keen relish of youthful appetite of the nice supper prepared for this birthday feast, and was enjoying as much as she thought one person could well contain, when she unfortunately overheard Eva Barton say to Flora Manning, one of "the girls" of whom she stood so much in fear, "There's Hannah Gordon with her everlasting white dress fudged over with a sash to make it look new. I do think her father might afford to give her better clothes; she's the eldest girl, too. I *would* have them, or stay at home, I know."

"Oh!" said Flora, with a contemptuous toss of her head, "it don't matter what she wears, anyhow,—she, a dowdy thing; no style about *her*."

Miss Flora's idea of style consisted in having a huge bag of hair, then all the rage,

called a waterfall (who *could* have so slandered one of the loveliest of nature's works?) hanging down her back, wearing the largest hoops and longest skirts her mother would allow, and swinging these appendages gracefully (as she thought).

Perhaps Hannah could have borne this without much disturbance, though no one likes to be called a dowdy, least of all a sensitive young girl; but, just as she was moving out of hearing distance from Eva and Flora, she met Anna Blake.

"Ah, you here, Hannah! I didn't know as mamma would let you come. Good child! to be willing to go home early, and to wear that old frock. It doesn't look so badly, I declare; but you know Eva made it a point with all the girls of her set, that they should have new dresses. How do you like my pink silk? Isn't it lovely? I coaxed it out of papa. He scolded well, as he always does when I ask for new things, and talked about money needed for disabled soldiers coming home from the war, for the freedmen, &c. &c.,

till mamma said, 'Mr. Blake, you never will understand the requirements of our social position. Anna visits in the first circle, and must have handsome things; and I am sure we are amply able to let her.' I always subside when mamma begins to talk, knowing the point is gained. Don't look troubled, dear, your dress is really very pretty and quite becoming; and, I dare say, Eva didn't expect you to have a new one, as we all know your father is not rich."

With this last shaft from her quiver, Anna rustled off with her pink silk and finery to repeat to her dear friend, Flora Manning, what she had just said, leaving Hannah with burning cheeks and angry spirit, which she strove vainly for some minutes to conquer. Helen, who had seen the encounter from a little distance, and guessed at its purport from her knowledge of Anna's spiteful character, came towards Hannah, and tried to fix her attention upon a beautiful collection of photographs of foreign scenery. But Hannah was too much disturbed to be amused. The words "old

frock," and "father not rich," kept sounding in her ears, and she was thankful when Howard Grey came up to her, and told her that her father was waiting.

She gladly said good night to Mr. and Mrs. Barton and Eva, and almost ran away from Howard, who was waiting in the hall to see her to her father.

"You're early, Hannah, though one wouldn't think it from the haste you're in. I am afraid you haven't enjoyed yourself: have you?"

"Yes, and no, Howard. I should have enjoyed it all, but for my foolish fear of 'the girls' which Helen thinks my *bête noir*."

"Oh, that's it, is it? I'm going home too, directly. My mother wished it. As for 'the girls,' Hannah, you are too sensible to care much for what they say or think."

"Too sensitive not to care more than I ought, Howard; though between two such sensible friends as Helen and yourself, I shall learn wisdom in time. Good-night."

As her father drove off, he said, "I was afraid you wouldn't be glad to see me."

"Indeed, you came in just the right time, papa."

The next day Hannah had the headache again, and the Rosamond week of troubles ended much as it began.

CHAPTER V.

THE OTHER SIDE.

HAVE any of the young readers of this book ever seen a piece of sparkling ore, with here and there a dark thread or vein running through it? That piece of ore is not unlike the character of Hannah Gordon, who was, on the whole, a bright, merry girl, full of fun and frolic, with an occasional tendency to look upon the small trials of her daily life till they became a dark vein in it. This tendency, however, was greatly increased by her physical state, which was partly owing to her rapid growth, and partly to her being overtaxed with study. For even good Dr. and Mrs. Gordon, sensible people as they were in most matters, had suffered themselves to float with the current in regard to the matter of education. The current in the nineteenth

century sets strongly towards over-education, without regard to the age or strength of the subject. Hannah had excellent abilities, took a high rank in school, and was anxious to maintain it, and her parents were anxious that she should. It did not occur to them that her frequent headaches, nervous irritability, and fits of lassitude were in part from over-study at a period of life when the brain, if it does not work readily, should be allowed to lie fallow, at least so far as relates to pursuing the more abstruse branches of study which require so much mental effort.

Thus far in her story we have seen Hannah under the influence of the dark vein, which is by no means a fair representation of her. It is time the bright and sparkling side should be seen, even if it, as is so often the case with merry girls in the spring-time of life, verges on silliness.

After the Rosamond week was over, a reaction took place in Hannah; her head was clear, her lessons were easily learned, her home duties were pleasures, and her spirits

rose in proportion. She herself was accustomed to call such periods her high days; and Helen Ashton said she could tell, by her step when she joined her on their way to school, the mood she was in. One of her favorite amusements at such periods of abounding spirits was to talk in the manner of some supposititious person; and, as her powers of imitation were good and her perceptions quick, she succeeded in giving great amusement in this way to Helen, whose temperament was more equable and matter of fact.

"Good morning, Miss Ashton," said Hannah, as she overtook Helen the Monday morning preceding the week referred to. "It is incredible the amount of work I've done and started to be done this morning, for the fair for the families of disabled soldiers. First, I've cut and sent out a large bundle of little aprons and night-caps to be made; for you know useful things are so much needed at fairs. I pay the women who make them, and then give them to the fair; so there's a double help."

"Oh," said Helen, "you're in the Lady Bountiful mood this morning, are you? I was afraid, if it proved a 'high day,' it would be the Flora McFlimsey role you would play."

"That'll keep; but do you know, Helen, we really are to have a large fair here this autumn, for that very purpose? and I'm so interested in it, and want to do, and haven't any time or money, that I am comforting myself with thinking what I would do if I could. So listen to me."

"Agreed, if you will listen to me afterwards, and let me tell you what you *can* do."

"A bargain; now don't interrupt again. Persons in my circumstances are at least deserving of respectful attention. I've bought the materials for a dozen breakfast-caps, which Marie, my maid, who has such exquisite taste, is to make up. Then the gardener is to make, at his leisure, some lovely cone and seed baskets, — all to be filled with the choicest flowers from garden and green-house. Our coachman (he is Swiss, you know) has a wonderful talent for carving, and he is to

make a quantity of corner and side brackets, and I shall paint some lovely vases. I have also purchased a large quantity of materials for fancy work, which I intend to give out to those who have taste but not means. Then there are a thousand things to be attended to beside. O Helen, how I do wish I could really do all these things, I feel so much for the poor soldiers' families who suffered while we were comfortable in our homes!"

"You will find you can do a good deal in the summer vacation, if you are not a Lady Bountiful. My mother has a plan similar to your imaginary one, and there will be no lack of materials. But you have really done a good morning's work. Don't you find it difficult to keep your large family of servants employed?"

"Oh, not the least; our house is immense, you know; the grounds very extensive; and we are constantly liable to visitors; so that there is full employment for all. I have but to utter a command, and it is at once obeyed."

"I congratulate you. We, who keep but

half as many servants, sometimes meet with difficulty. But here is the 'Academy of Wisdom,' and I am afraid you must come down from your high estate and be for a short time plain Hannah Gordon again."

The "high day" spirit, however, was not easily subdued. In fact, Hannah, though an excellent scholar, was not faultless as to deportment, her mirth and keen sense of the ridiculous often getting the better of her gravity. This morning she more than once encountered Mr. Percy's eyes fixed gravely upon her, and at last he gave a very decided shake of his head, and stern look of disapprobation, as he saw her making up a face in imitation of the drawing-master's when he was disturbed, behind his back. Her next exploit was to remove the comb from the head of the young lady who sat in front of her in one of the class-rooms, thereby displaying to view a cushion over which the luxuriant curls had fallen. For this piece of mischief she received a severe reprimand from Miss Parker, one of the assistant teachers. This sobered

her somewhat, and she was able to keep tolerably quiet till school closed. As she went for her hat and sack, she overheard Anna Blake expatiating upon a new muslin she had just had made up, and this started her off in a new character.

"Oh," she said, Helen being as usual her favored listener, "the torment I do have in getting my dresses made to suit me! Why, if you will credit me, my dressmaker actually put but eight breadths in my blue silk dress, when I expressly ordered ten. Then to match my dresses in trimming and buttons is dreadful. I'm having a dozen new ones made for Saratoga and Newport, beside others being altered. I've spent days in the city running for ribbons, gimps, and buttons. I've sent to New York and Philadelphia to match my subdued lilac silk dress, and finally succeeded, through the aid of my cousin, in finding a shade that would answer. Mamma says I need change and rest, as indeed I do. Another year I am to have a French maid, who understands all these things, if papa's

business is good. I shall have change, if not rest, when I am away. How I do enjoy coming out with my exquisitely delicate muslins and silks, with their perfectly matched or contrasted trimmings, beside the shoddy people, with their gorgeous dresses and glittering jewelry!"

"I don't wonder you need rest after your arduous labors: your toilet must be a great care to you."

"Oh, *immense;* but then it pays, to use one of Harry's vulgarisms. Still I tell Lilias, — she's my poor cousin, you know, her father is a teacher on a small salary (I don't know how much, but less than my allowance for dress), — that she is saved a great deal of care and anxiety. It's so easy to get her simple gray dresses and muslins, and hat to match!"

"What did she say?"

"Oh, very coldly, that if I had to make and remake all my dresses, and try on a very little to present a decent and not outlandish appearance, I should then know something of real work and care. Poor thing! she doesn't in

the least know how hard it is to dress as *noblesse oblige*. To be sure, I shouldn't like to wash the breakfast-dishes, help take care of a crowd of children (poor folks always do have a lot), and sew and knit and crochet, as she does; but la! she's used to it."

"Helen," said Hannah, all at once changing her light manner to one of seriousness, "this *is* the way that such girls as Anna Blake talk and reason."

"Well, let them; it doesn't require the wisdom of Solomon to see how foolish they are: but take care, Hannah, that you do not fall into a habit of fancying all rich people are so fond of dress and so foolish."

"Never, while I have you for a bright and shining light to prove the contrary."

"And dozens of other girls as well. Your Liliases often spend more time and thought in trying to make old clothes look 'maist as weel as new,' than the most earnest, rich fashionist. I've heard mamma say so, and I've seen it too."

"Well, what would you have them do?"

said Hannah, firing up at this; "look like dowdies, or sixty-years-back dressed girls?"

"No, indeed; but I would not have them condemn others for what is often in themselves only 'sour grapes.' Lydia Harris is my ideal in this matter. She always looks neat and pretty. Her dresses are made becomingly in the fashion, but never in any extreme; and it is plain to be seen, that her mind is more attended to than her dress."

"She don't care for dress."

"Doesn't she? I think, if she had the means, you would find she cared enough for it to dress very prettily. The thing is, she cares for other things more."

"Well, *I* wish we were clothed, like the lilies of the field, without thought or care."

"Probably we should be if we were made without souls and minds, simply as objects to give pleasure to the senses. I prefer the present order of things, with all its evils, and so at heart do you."

The two girls walked along a short distance without speaking, and then Helen said

abruptly, "I wonder, Hannah, what you really would do and be if you had plenty of money; the Lady Bountiful of the morning, to whom the power of doing good is the highest pleasure, or the Flora McFlimsey of the present hour, intent upon dress and pleasure."

"Papa says we never know how we should act under certain circumstances, until we are tried. I don't *know* what I should do and be under that same delightful supposition of yours, Helen; but I'm sure, yes, *morally certain*, as Aunt Maria says when she's dreadful positive about any thing, that I should be a Lady Bountiful."

"I believe you would, Hannah, because you're so generous now with every thing you have, and because you have such a warm heart. No; I don't mean it for a compliment. If you took it as such, I've an antidote. How can a good-hearted girl like yourself delight to make fun of our poor drawing-master?"

"I don't make fun *of* him, only *at* him. I wouldn't have him know I did for any thing. He is such a funny little man, and then, when

he's not pleased, he draws his brows together, so that you can hardly see his eyes, and pouts out his lips so, I declare I've seen *you* smile at him."

"Yes, he does look comically sometimes; but then, by imitating him, you draw attention to his defects."

"Oh, I know it's naughty, and I'll try not to do it again, till — next time."

"Some day he will see you, and then I should rather be in his place than yours."

"Oh, dear! I don't seem to suit any way. If I am in spirits, I am sure to do something naughty, hurt somebody's feelings, or something of the kind, when I'm just as innocent of any harm as those flies, which seem to be having such a merry go-round in the air. Then, if I'm not in spirits, that's naughty and ungrateful, &c. I can't help *seeing* things in a ridiculous light: can I?"

"No; but you can help making others see persons in a ridiculous light, when, but for you, they never would."

"Well, I never shall learn, I'm afraid, to be

like you, Helen. Next thing you'll say my nonsense-talks are doing harm to somebody or other. I can't give those up, even to please you, Miss Ashton."

"No, not such talks as we had this morning: if not the wisest things in the world, there certainly was no harm in them between ourselves; but you remind me of something I meant to tell you. Do you remember, about a fortnight ago, we were in Mr. Carter's new store, looking at some blue silk you were getting for your mother?"

"Yes, perfectly: and that I told you, when the clerk took down a piece of rich silk, that I meant to tease Harry to buy me a dress of it, and that my point lace and pearl set would look lovely with it. I know, too, that the clerk heard me; and I was tickled to see how astonished he looked, and how very polite he became afterwards. Then I dare say, he heard me say, too, that I was afraid John forgot to tell the coachman to call to take us home. I thought it was a good joke, and so did you."

"Yes, I know I did, at the time; but when you left the counter, and I stopped to speak to Alice Grey, whom it seems the clerk knew, I heard him ask her who that lady was, in the brown gingham, and white straw hat. She told him, and he looked astonished. I told mamma about it, when I got home; and she said you might give a false idea of yourself by speaking in that way, and so draw the attention of the clerks in the store to you in a manner that wouldn't be pleasant."

"She was right, as I found to my cost; for, the next time I went to the store, I saw two or three of the young men looking at me, and laughing. I shall take care when I talk about my pearls and laces and carriage, and, most of all, my Harry, not to be overheard. But fun I must have some way, and I don't want to be hedged in on every side."

"I suppose you need not be, only on the sides that lead you to run the risk of hurting people's feelings, or giving false impressions of yourself."

"Well, you've done your duty, Helen, and have, as good old Parson Field says, 'the unspeakable comfort of knowing how to walk in the straight path of duty.' Please, ma'am, could you give me a recommend for *any* thing?"

"Nothing but mischief, in your present wild mood. There comes Howard Grey, looking as sober as a judge."

His sober face relaxed a little as he caught sight of the girls' merry looks, and, bowing low to Hannah, he said, "How is Harry to-day, and why are you walking these dusty streets? Has John forgotten your orders again?"

Hannah colored, and said, "Nonsense! why must you have heard of that silly speech of mine? But I don't care: you've encouraged me in talking just so many and many a time when we used to play together so much by the brook, yes, and joined in, too, for all you look so grave now. But I'm not going to be lectured any more. Helen has rigidly performed her duty in that respect, and I've repented,

and am all ready to sin again. That's the way; isn't it? But," changing her tone, "don't tell Frank, it would vex him, and I don't want to do that."

CHAPTER VI.

POOR JACK.

WHEN Hannah reached home, she found the realities of life awaiting her. High days and low days and imaginary life were alike dispelled from her mind; for she found Jack had met with a sad accident. First in fun and frolic, he was no less first in readiness to oblige. A small boy had thrown his ball upon the ledge of a high fence, upon one side of the school-yard, far beyond his reach; and Jack had found him sobbing bitterly, because, as he said, he didn't know how he ever could get another if he lost this. It was also beyond Jack's reach; but he was not without expedients in such a case. A block of wood stood in the yard; upon that he placed the water-pail, and armed with a long pole, he was sure he could get the ball. So he probably

could have done, but that the pail, from long service, was not strong enough to bear him, and broke through his first jump. The block, carelessly placed, turned over, and down came block, remnants of pail, Jack, and all; and, in the fall, Jack's ankle was twisted, his wrist sprained, and his whole body jarred. In this state he had been carried home in great suffering; and, when Hannah arrived, her father and another physician had been examining the extent of his injuries. No bones were broken, and not much could be done for him but make external applications, and give him entire rest. Rest for Jack seemed an absurdity, but rest it must be; and nothing remained for the family but to try to render his wearisome confinement as easy as possible.

But how was this to be effected for the most restless and active of all the restless and active Gordons?

"We must resolve ourselves into a committee of the whole," said Dr. Gordon, "and make it our chief object to amuse Jack and keep up his spirits. Mamma and Prince are

always on hand. Charlie is a very good little reader; Hannah, still better; the little ones can do their part in running errands; Sam can perform his tumbling feats when Jack is in the mood for being diverted; Frank will soon be here for vacation; and, last but not least, I flatter myself I shall be in and out at all hours, and serve as spice for the rest. But one thing mind," catching a glimpse of Hannah's tearful, sympathetic face; "no sad or doleful looks, on penalty of being banished from the west room. There are better ways than that of showing your interest for Jack."

After Jack was relieved from the intensity of his first suffering, and every thing was arranged in the west room for his comfort and convenience, his father said to him: "Keep up good courage, Jack. This is a pleasant prison, and your keepers will be as lenient as your case admits."

"But my vacation, papa, and my summer-house, and my visit to the country, and my — oh — so many things I had planned to do!"

"Sorry for you, my boy, but you'll have to change your programme, and substitute quiet for active pleasures. It will be tiresome, dear, no doubt; but my boy is brave enough to bear a good deal of disappointment and pain, when neither can be helped. Then, too, you have the pleasant thought that you were hurt in doing a kind act, not in wanton mischief, or even in harmless sport. For a few days, however, you must be very quiet, as there is a little tendency to fever."

For more than a week Jack was very restless and feverish. At times he suffered greatly, and could not bear the least noise or excitement; and Hannah felt it to be a great privilege that she was the only one of the children who was allowed to go into his room, and that he always greeted her with a languid smile.

Sitting beside him, softly brushing his hair, or bathing his aching head, or fanning him, she was so filled with compassion for his helpless state, that she forgot that she had ever been so teased and annoyed by him, or remem-

bered it only to wonder that such trifles ever could have disturbed her. How he could be so patient she did not understand. Always in health so full of life and activity, scarcely able without frequent reminder to sit as quietly at meals or when visitors were in the house as propriety demanded, and now confined to his bed or couch unable to move without assistance, hand and foot helpless and suffering,— was this really, lively, noisy, almost perpetual-motion Jack? But the trying time of his sickness had not come, either to Jack or his family. Weak from pain, he was glad of intervals of ease, and thankful to be quiet; but, as time passed on, and the suffering had ceased in a degree, he became impatient of his enforced confinement, and was often dwelling upon the pleasures he had lost, sometimes fretfully and always regretfully.

One afternoon Hannah came in to sit an hour with him, and read or talk or do whatever he liked best.

"Has Aunt Maria gone?" he answered, without noticing Hannah's offer.

"Yes, I believe so: did you wish to see her again? She told mamma she thought you were very patient."

"See her? no. Papa would say, if he feels as I do, that is, that she's a mental or moral or some sort of an inward blister. My, how I do smart inside! As for patience, well, one has need of it when she's round."

"O Jack, naughty Jack, you shouldn't speak so of Aunt Maria."

"Shouldn't I? Well, she shouldn't speak *to* me as she does; advising me, and patronizing, and, worst of all, praising me. I have my father and mother to advise me, if I need it; praise me, if I deserve it; and I don't want anybody to patronize me. Hannah, please bring me the big dictionary."

Hannah laughed at the sudden transition from Aunt Maria to the big dictionary, but arranged the rack on the couch upon which he was lying for him, and asked, "Where shall I open for you?"

"Oh, in the G's; I'm going to look out *good*. You remember what papa said about the word on your birthday: don't you?"

"Yes: I wonder if Charlie has ever looked it up."

"Long ago, you may be sure. Here it is; two columns, I declare, of definitions. It well might mean all papa said it did. And" (after a few moment's silence) "it does, though I never should have thought it. Derived in several languages from *God*, of course it must mean a great deal. Well, the next time Aunt Maria pats me and says I'm a good boy, I'll try and remember that she means I'm strong and kind and wise and patient and beautiful and merry, and lots of other *goods*, and not feel as if I should like to pull off that streaming, dangling thing she wears on her head, and that's all the time tickling my face or neck while she's patting or patronizing me."

"I sha'n't say you're a good boy, if you talk so. Aunt Maria brought you some jelly and custards, and something else, — I won't

tell you what, to punish you for your ingratitude."

"Oh, I do hope it is blackberries, and then I'll call her good, better, best, which, according to the dictionary, is all that can be said of anybody."

"And let her pat you and tickle you with her ribbons, without feeling so very — shall I say the ugly word? — fractious?"

"I'll try; but then, Hannah, don't you know that some people are so dreadful good, that it makes one feel out of sorts to see them?"

"Not much danger of your ever making any one out of sorts in that way, Master Jack Gordon," said his sister, evading the question.

"But is it blackberries, Hannah? Oh, yes, your eyes say so. She must have paid a lot for them, for I'm sure they weren't raised hereabouts."

"Well, it isn't blackberries, you goose. Blackberries the middle of July! But it is this," producing a light drawing-board that could be placed on a rack, a book of simple

copies, and some colored crayons. "She heard you say you meant to try and draw with your left hand."

"Hannah, I believe I am — ashamed of Jack Gordon. This is jolly in her; well, kind and *good* then, if that suits!"

CHAPTER VII.

VICTORY.

"HANNAH," said Helen Ashton to her friend, as they were walking home from school one day about a week before vacation, "do you know what a charming plan mamma has for us this summer?"

"No, indeed: how should I?"

"Oh, I thought perhaps your imagination had forestalled the reality. It's no more nor less than a plan for you to go to the White Mountains with us in place of my cousin Ella Norton, whom mamma had previously invited on account of her health. We wanted you all the time, but mamma thought Ella needed a change the most; and now dear, good Uncle Charles has invited her to go to Newport with him; and Dr. Chauncy says sea-air is far better than mountain for her complaints.

You needn't feel any pricks of conscience as to obligation, &c., for you know we always have some one beside ourselves. It is one of papa's and mamma's pleasant oddities, that a pleasure and a good shared is far more than doubled. Precisely by what process of moral arithmetic they arrive at this result I do not know. I only know in this case it is very delightful to me, especially as mamma said that I deserved a companion for my attention to the poor old lady who went with us last year. You know Mrs. Groves? If you don't, your good father does; for he has attended her for years without making any charge. She has a small income, and no near relative to depend upon: so her friends are all very kind to her. Last year, papa heard your father say to mamma, that he thought an entire change of air and scene would do Mrs. Groves more good than medicine: so he proposed that she should go with us. She is not very sick, you know, only feeble and miserable, and subject to fits of depression, since her son was killed in the army, at the battle of Bull

Run. Mamma said she would be very glad to have her go, and that we could all divide the little care she needed. I was glad to do what I could for her; for I pity people who are old and sad,— though she is not really very old; only a little over sixty: but she seems so. So now my story's done, and don't you dare say nay to the plan. You see I'm quite excited about it. Don't *you* like it? You've said never a word."

"Like it? More than tongue can tell,— only — perhaps — I don't know — I'm not quite sure."

"Don't know — not quite sure — what lion is in the way now?"

"No lion; at least, I know I don't mean to think there is this morning. I *know* I've plenty of dresses, such as your mother would think necessary for a school-girl, so that's no obstacle; and, as to the rest, I think we can manage."

"The rest" referred to Jack; and though Hannah said over and over to herself, that as he was now getting better, and Frank was

coming home, he would not miss her, she still felt some misgivings upon the subject. Helen had said her mother would not be able to see Dr. and Mrs. Gordon till the next day: so perhaps something would happen before that time that would give her an idea of Jack's feelings upon the subject.

Something did happen, sooner than she expected; for, as she was going upstairs to Jack's room, she heard his voice speaking in a fretful tone to Charlie, who had just said how jolly it was that vacation was coming.

"Oh, yes! jolly to you, I dare say, who can run about and play, and do as you like, but not a bit jolly to me. I declare I'm as tired as can be of lying here; and I do believe none of you know how hard it is. I suppose you'll be going off to the country next in my place."

"I never thought of such a thing. I'm sure I wouldn't go if I had the chance, if you didn't want me to; and as to being jolly, why, we can't be sober all the time; though we are sorry enough for you, every one of us."

"Oh!" said Jack, quite mollified by his brother's earnestness, and a little ashamed of his own fretfulness, "I'm sure I don't want you to stay at home for me. Hannah has planned lots of things that we can do together; and though you're a nice little fellow, Charlie, when one has the use of his legs, of course Hannah is the best for a quiet life, and, thank goodness, she's to be at home."

"But there is Frank," persisted Charlie, quite astonished at hearing Jack give such a decided preference to a girl, — Jack, who was usually so conscious of belonging to the stronger sex.

"Frank's very well too on an occasion; but the truth is, he's most *too* good, don't get cross nor stirred up ever, and Hannah does sometimes, though she's real kind to me; but what's the use of having all this talk about it?" added he fretfully. "Hannah's just Hannah, and nobody else, and Hannah I want. She never says she's tired of being with me, and I don't believe she is."

Poor Hannah! down, down, tumbled her castle in the air, literally; for, in the few moments since she had left Helen, she had taken a rapid journey *up* to the White Mountains, breathed the invigorating air, viewed the grand and beautiful scenery of which she had heard so much, and enjoyed the society of her friend, whom she loved with girlish ardor and enthusiasm. She did not go into Jack's room now. She knew her face, honest as her heart, always would tell a story Jack, in his present susceptible state, would at once read. So she toiled wearily up to her own little room, all the spring and elasticity taken out of her step, and a good deal of it, for the time being, out of her heart. Mechanically she closed her door, sat down by the broad window-sill, hid her face in her hands, and, before she was aware of her own condition, was sobbing out her disappointment. A girl trained in habits of selfish thought and action would have brought up various and plausible reasons why she should not lose her promised pleasure: such as, — Jack was unreasonable; with papa,

mamma, the children, and, most of all, Frank, to rely upon for care and amusement, he could not miss her very much, or, if he did, he ought not; she was tired, needed the change and rest; she might never have such another opportunity again; it would disappoint Helen and kind Mr. and Mrs. Ashton, &c., &c.

It is true all this did pass through her mind, but not as reasons why she should go. Most of us, young as well as old, who have had the benefit of right teaching and example, when we come to grapple with a question of duty, are able to decide at once which is the *right* course, although we cannot always help dwelling upon the motives for gratifying our inclinations. If Hannah wavered in the least as to her idea of right, Jack's summary of the whole matter settled the question for her. "Hannah's just Hannah, and nobody else, and Hannah I want." It made no difference in her clear perception of right, that Jack did not know that she had the opportunity for this great delight, — pleasure was too tame a word to express her feelings. Unconscious of it, he

had expressed his strong preference for her. He should not be disappointed; he should not even know that she had the offer of this journey; neither should her father or mother know it. She would go and see Mrs. Ashton in the afternoon, and tell her just how the case stood, and ask her not to speak of it to any one. If she was to "eat a crust of bread," and this was the very hardest crust she had ever yet volunteered to dispose of, no one should know it, — no one, she thought reverently, but the Heavenly Father, whose love and tenderness seemed very near and precious to her, now that she, in her generous spirit of self-sacrifice, was uplifted to him. No, there was no question in her mind as to what was right. The Saviour's teachings and example were not to her a dead letter. Reverently, but lovingly, Dr. and Mrs. Gordon had taught their children of the Lord; and their example had gone hand in hand with their instruction. Consequently, as has been seen, Hannah had not the battle to fight that those have who are weak and wavering in their ideas of duty, and

who often manage to convince themselves, and sometimes others, wrong is right. The battle she had to fight, and it was a hard one, was to reconcile herself to doing *cheerfully* the plain duty before her. "God loveth a cheerful giver" applies to gifts of the will no less than gifts of the hand.

The hardest battles are sometimes those fought in a short time; and half an hour sufficed to Hannah to enable her to look upon the idea of remaining at home not only without pain, but with some sensation of pleasure at the thought that she was so essential to Jack's happiness,—Jack, whose greatest pleasure, heretofore, had seemed to be to tease and annoy her. "If I can only keep them all from knowing about it, poor Jack sha'n't have the chance to say that I ate this hard crust;" and Hannah laughed softly, even while the tears were still slowly falling. For Jack had, in times past, been accustomed to call Hannah's little acts of self-denial "eating crusts of bread," because she had once rather ostentatiously reproved the younger ones for

taking the soft, and leaving the crusts, adding, "I always eat the crust."

"Yes, and tell of it too," Jack had said bluntly; and so the words passed into a family proverb, conveying a great deal of meaning to those initiated.

"Does your head ache, dear?" asked Mrs. Gordon, when Hannah appeared at the dinner-table after her conflict.

With perfect truth Hannah could answer that it did; but, when her mother suggested lying down as a remedy, Hannah said she thought the fresh air would do her good, and that she would like to go to Mrs. Ashton's, if her mother did not object.

"Certainly not, my dear, and do not hurry back."

"Oh, I am not going at present. I haven't seen Jack since school; and I will sit with him a while, and rest myself at the same time, before I go out."

When Hannah stated her case to Mrs. Ashton with a calm face but slightly trembling voice, she said, "Have you consulted your parents, Hannah?"

"No, ma'am, I have not; and I have come so soon partly to beg you not to say any thing to them about it: they would want me to go so much, and Jack would say, 'Go,' too; and no one knows, except myself, how he really does feel, and I never should have known if I had not overheard him talking to Charlie."

"Perhaps you are right, Hannah; but it seems to me it is too great a good for you to give up upon your own responsibility."

"I have thought that all over, Mrs. Ashton; and I do not see why, when I *know* that I am right, I should trouble other people to advise me in any thing that relates to myself only. Papa said once, when he was speaking of Jack, that his course in life depended very much upon home influence, he was so excitable and impulsive; and then he turned to me, and said, 'You could do a great deal for Jack, Hannah, if you only knew how.'

"'I don't see how, papa,' I said, 'when he seems to care so little for me.'

"'*Seems* doesn't amount to much in a boy

like Jack, I fancy,' he said. 'You'll find the key to his heart some time if you try.'

"I believe I *have* found the key to it now, and I don't want to lose it. You know Jack is not like Frank; and, from what papa said, I thought he meant that Jack would be either a very good or bad man, according to the influence that was used with him. I begin now to see how I can help him, being near his age, and, as he says, more like him in temper than Frank; that is, not so good. It may sound odd to you; but what I *mean* is, that he will talk to me about things — wrong things and faults — when he will not to any one else; and you know if I have faults myself, and am trying to conquer them, I can help him, or we can help each other."

"I understand you perfectly, my dear," said Mrs. Ashton, "even the rather paradoxical statement, that you can help him more than Frank, because you are not so good. It is not the *goodness* that stands in Frank's way in helping Jack, but Jack's feeling about it. I believe you are right in your decision, my dear. Sis-

ters little know the influence they exert over their brothers for good or evil. Now is the most favorable time for you to win Jack's entire love and confidence; and this proof of love that you are now giving him, even if he never knows of it, will be blessed to you both. You shrink from praise for a sacrifice that has cost you a hard struggle, my dear Hannah; but you must let me tell you how much I respect you for it. And now you have fairly won the right to name a friend to take in your place. Who shall it be?"

"Oh, if I might really ask you to — to —"

"You *really* may ask me to take any one whom you wish; and I will grant your wish, if possible."

"Lydia Harris. Helen is fond of her, and she needs it far more than I do: she has so little pleasure — I mean what most girls call pleasure — at home, and she would so enjoy it."

"Lydia Harris shall go, dear, if she can and will. I thought of her before I asked you; but I thought it was only fair that you should

give another the gratification you had denied yourself."

"You will be sure and tell Helen just how it is, Mrs. Ashton? I hope she will not think, as I am sure you do not, that I do not care *very*, *very* much about going."

"Helen will think as I do, dear," said Mrs. Ashton, kissing her affectionately, "that a kind sister is a dearer friend for that kindness. Let us see as much of you as you can, before we go. One long day after vacation you must give to Helen: that I shall claim as a right."

Hannah left Mrs. Ashton with a lighter step and heart than she had carried to her. It was a great gratification to her that she had met with Mrs. Ashton's full sympathy and approbation; still more, her respect. To merit *that*, from one so much loved and honored in a wide circle of friends, was indeed something to be grateful for. This feeling, the conflict through which she had passed, the victory gained, and the softened state of feeling which ensued, combined to give her face an unusually gentle and sweet expression, which was

noticed by both her parents at the tea-table. During a short drive she had afterwards with her father, she was unusually quiet; and, when he spoke of her plans for vacation, she mentioned several in which Jack could take part, and expressed her relief at the prospect of freedom from study for a while. "Not that I do not like to go to school very much, papa; but I have had so many headaches this spring and summer, that I am tired of study for once. Jack and I have concluded to be as silly as we like, and not to open a *knowledge* book, except the dictionary, all the vacation; and, if Frank brings in his heavy books, we'll expel him."

"Very wise for you, who I fear have overtaxed that ready brain of yours; but really I did not think Jack in any danger from excess of study. I must look into such an alarming symptom, — the more alarming, that it is so entirely new."

"Jack doesn't like to study, to be sure, papa, but then he will learn a great deal by hearing and seeing. I laughed when he said so ear-

nestly, that he didn't mean to look in a study book all vacation."

Later in the evening, when Dr. Gordon was alone with his wife, he said to her, "I can't quite make Hannah out. I met Helen Ashton this afternoon; and she told me that her mother was coming to see us to-morrow, to get our permission to take Hannah with them to the White Mountains. She said, too, that Hannah, to whom she mentioned it this morning, was delighted with the idea. I naturally supposed that she would speak of it while we were out driving this evening. On the contrary, when I asked her of her plans for the vacation, they all had reference to Jack, and to being at home."

"Something must have occurred, then, in his room, to make her determine to stay at home. Jack surely would not be so selfish as to wish her to give up such a gratification. Now I remember Hannah looked as if she had been crying to-day at the dinner-table, but I attributed it to her headache. What can we do about it?"

"Nothing at all: if Hannah has decided the matter herself without consulting us, it is best to let her abide by her own choice. I am inclined to think she has not done so rashly, as, strange as it may seem, Mrs. Gordon, *I* have a pretty good opinion of your eldest daughter's judgment; and I don't think she would hastily or without good grounds give up a pleasure and an advantage, such as this offer of the Ashtons."

"Still, she is so sensitive and conscientious, she may have taken a mistaken view of her duty."

"Then it is best for her to learn in this way more wisdom for the future, but I do not think she has made any mistake. After the vacation is over, I will speak to her about it, if she does not tell us herself previously. I understand your feeling, Margaret; but be sure the sooner in life a girl or a boy learns to think and act independently in matters of duty, the better it is for them in the future. A mistake, if it is on the side of over conscientiousness,

is of no great moment: the habit of decision is of inestimable importance to the character and to happiness."

"But her health, Frank?"

"Will not suffer in this healthy situation. Jack will soon be able to be out in his wheel-chair a good deal; and then I have a plan for a week or two in August, to get rid of some of my family for a time, and leave me a little leisure for study or laziness: laziness, I think, will carry the day. Positively, madam, what with *your* claims, and the young Gordons' claims, and my patients' claims, I've hardly a chance to wink."

"I know it, Frank, and I wish you didn't have to work so hard."

"Nonsense; there, I have set you off in a worse track than the other: so let's return to Hannah. Don't you think our little girl has shown a noble spirit, to decide this question for herself, and then never let us know a word about it?"

"Indeed I do, and I know just why she did

it. She did not want to be praised for doing what she felt was right to do, and neither did she want Jack to feel that she had given up so much for him; though, by the way, I'm not quite sure that she didn't say something to him about it."

Dr. Gordon laughed heartily, and said, "Well done, Margaret! you build a high monument of praise one minute, and then topple it down the next. I *am almost* sure that Jack knows nothing at all about it. Now I move that this meeting and discussion be adjourned."

"And I heartily second your motion, only"—

"'Only' your tender mother heart still regrets that Hannah cannot have this great pleasure, and the greater one of doing what she thinks right, at the same time. Margaret," and here Dr. Gordon's tone and look were serious almost to sadness, "this one act of Hannah's will not only certainly work for her future good, but it may be the means of giv-

ing her an influence over Jack which to *him* will make all the difference between ruin and salvation."

CHAPTER VIII.

VACATION.

THE long-expected vacation had come, and with it came Frank also. He was a tall, good-looking boy, with rather a serious expression of mouth, which seemed to rebuke his laughing eyes and saucy-looking chestnut-colored curls, which were so thick as to be always tumbling over each other, defying all law and order in arrangement.

After he had, in their opinion, given sufficient attention to papa, mamma, Hannah, and Jack, and, though last, by no means least in household estimation, Prince Walter, Frank was seized by the younger children, headed by Charlie, and literally dragged off to visit the garden and summer and hen houses. Then wonderful stories of the past had to be told, and equally wonderful plans for the future

unfolded, in all which they received the interest and sympathy of their elder brother.

Ella, in particular, was a perfect little tyrant in her efforts to monopolize "Fank," obliging him to listen to her stream of broken prattle, and making him serve as man, horse, or dog, as her fancy prompted.

Jack, meantime, was left with his father and mother; and, as the sound of their merry voices and retreating footsteps died away, he threw himself back upon his couch, closed his eyes, compressed his lips, and looked altogether as dissatisfied and surly a boy as one would often see.

Dr. Gordon knew, as all true physicians do, how to "minister to a mind diseased;" and, if he could not pluck out a rooted sorrow, he at least meant to do his best to prevent such. He felt very tenderly towards Jack, notwithstanding his fretful, surly ways. He knew that a boy not prostrated by fever, but merely confined to inaction by a local injury, could not be in a natural or healthy state of mind or body, while cut off from out-of-door air

and exercise, to which he had been so freely accustomed.

The only thing, then, to be done for him, was to try and direct his thoughts into another channel, and, if he could not go out, at least give him an object of interest beyond himself. Something had occurred that very morning, while he was making his round of visits, which he thought would serve to arouse and interest this warm, generous-hearted boy, and also give Hannah something to do which would prevent her from dwelling upon her disappointment.

Accordingly, Dr. Gordon watched Jack for a few moments as he lay on his couch, and, seeing no signs of returning cheerfulness, said, in his most cheery tones, which were almost a tonic to a dispirited patient, "Jack, do you know that I saw a little friend of yours this morning?"

"No, sir: who?"

"No less a person than little Tommy Brown, whose ball you tried to get the day you met with your accident."

"I wish he had left his ball at home that day."

"So does he, or lost it, or any thing, he says, rather than you should have been injured. Poor fellow! I pitied him, he felt so badly. You know it is so hard to know that one has been the means of injuring another, even without fault or intention. But it is not of that I wished to speak to you. His mother is sick, always feeble, but now confined to her bed with a broken leg. Tommy is chief cook, nurse, and every thing else, his mother says; 'the best little boy in the world, doctor, I do believe,' she said to me. It's a poor place enough they live in, — dingy walls and broken furniture, and a yard that might be improved; but Tommy does all he can, I don't doubt. They need almost every thing. I have already procured some wood for the little fire they want, and some of the bare necessaries of life from the town; friends of mine, upon whom I can call, will give comfortable bedding and delicacies for the mother, but still there remains more to be done. Would you like to lend a hand?"

"I, papa? I've no hand to lend or feet either; I wish I had; I'd clear up the yard, and perhaps I could help in the house too. I've no money, so I don't see that I can do any thing."

"Oh, yes, dear, you have some money, or, what amounts to the same thing, your banker has some. When I promised you a visit to your uncle's farm, I made a calculation that it would cost about ten dollars for the whole expense of the trip. Now, as you cannot go, I mean to let you have the ten dollars for your own, with no stipulation as to its use, except it shall be such as your own conscience approves."

Jack had listened with sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks; and now, half rising, he exclaimed, "Do you really mean it, papa? ten dollars for my *very, very* own? I know what I will do: I will give it to Mrs. Brown to make herself comfortable with. No, that wouldn't be best. If I could only go there, and see the rooms, and work,—but then there's Hannah and Frank. Oh! I know now, if you like the plan, what I'll do: I'll work by proxy at pres-

ent, and, when I get well, I'll work myself. Couldn't I get the rooms painted and papered for that money?"

"Certainly, if you don't have to pay for the work."

"Well, I guess, if I find the materials, Frank and Hannah can use them. I must make my estimates, papa, for I know you always count the cost of every thing you do, beforehand; and you made us do so when you gave us the old shed-room for a play-room, and we wanted to whitewash it, and mend the window-frames. By the way, ten dollars would pay for the window we want in the east side of the shed."

"Yes; and you can use the money for that, if you prefer. Don't decide too hastily."

"I'll call a council of three, — Frank, Hannah, and myself; though I'm pretty sure I have decided already. How soon can we begin, papa?"

"As soon as you like, at least in the kitchen. By the time that is in order, Mrs. Brown can probably be moved out of her bedroom. She has but two rooms and a little wash-place.

Tommy sleeps in a trundle-bed, under hers, now she is sick. The rooms are about twelve feet square. I don't think you can have any painting done at present; but a little whitewash for the ceilings, buff for the kitchen-walls, and a neat paper on the bedroom, will make a great change in the rooms."

"Not to mention a plentiful use of soap and water, first of all," said Mrs. Gordon, who had until now been an interested listener.

"Oh, yes! I was sure they came in somewhere, from their frequent use at home; but really didn't know where to begin. You see, Jack, after all, we shall have to call in your mother."

"Let me ask Frank and Hannah separately what to do, and see what they will say."

"Agreed," said Dr. Gordon, laughing; "and, if Frank jun. knows more of such matters than Frank sen., why, I shall attribute it to the degeneracy of the times."

"Where are they?" asked Jack eagerly. "I want to set about it at once. I wish I

could go myself; but, as that can't be, I'll ask Hannah to go this very afternoon, and bring me home a word-picture of the place and its — capabilities, I believe that is the word I want. Please send Frank here first, papa, and then Hannah."

"Will it not be best to let them see the place and then decide what reforms are most needed."

"No, indeed, sir; because they'll talk it over, and get all mixed up in their notions. Please to tell Frank just what you told me, and then I'll put them to the question."

Frank was called in, the case and Jack's wishes stated to him in the most concise manner, and then Jack broke in with "Now, Frank, what would you do first to the rooms?"

"Paper and paint, and fix up generally."

"That's right, my boy," said Dr. Gordon, laughing. "I'm glad you're no wiser than your father. Now call Hannah."

This time it was Jack who hastily told the story, enlarging upon the forlorn aspect of the rooms, and ending with, "What's the first

thing to be done to make things look nice and pleasant?"

"I can't be quite sure till I've seen the place; but I suppose, of course, the rooms will need sweeping, dusting, and cleaning, — windows included in the cleaning process. Then, if they are like old Nurse Jones's, every thing will look a 'deal more comfortable,' as she said, when the sun is let in. Next, I should paper and paint; and, when things are replaced, repair, and put in as good order as possible."

"Bravo!" said Dr. Gordon, "mother over again, 'only more so.' Poor work we should have made of it, Frank, beginning at the end. Now, I think of it, paint wouldn't stick on dirty, greasy doors, &c., and dust would adhere to new paint."

"Will you go this afternoon, Frank and Hannah?" asked Jack.

"Yes," said Frank, "if Hannah will do the talking. I hardly know how to invade a person's premises with proposals to clean and renew"

"I shall tell her it is Jack's wish to do something to make her comfortable; and I don't believe she will object. Mamma will give us something to carry, I suppose."

"I suppose she will," said Mrs. Gordon, "as she already has a basket packed."

The visit was paid, and, in little more than an hour after they left home, Frank and Hannah came back in high spirits. Hannah had entered into the plan with great zeal. Dr. Gordon was right in thinking that no more effectual remedy for her disappointment could be found than to give her a helping work to do for another.

"Now, Hannah," said Jack, before she had fairly got up-stairs, "I'll shut my eyes, and you can give me the word-picture."

"You remember a little court that leads out of Avery Place?"

"Yes."

"Go up that court till you come to a little one-story house, once painted drab, on your right; open the door, go into a small passage, and knock at a door, also on your right. Go

in, and you will see a forlorn-looking room, with green paper shades, torn and dirty, at the windows; a bed in one corner, covered with a worn and dirty quilt; two chairs, one with broken back, the other whole, but defaced; a little table once of light maple wood, now — well, I don't know any better name than dirt-color; a cracked china vase, on the mantel-shelf; two large shells, covered with dust; and a britannia lamp. The floor looks as if Tommy had swept it, and the bit of carpet beside the bed is ragged and dirty. The next room is quite as forlorn as to paint and walls; with an old stove, a square table, once, I suppose, white; a stool, one chair; a small closet, with cracked and broken crockery in it, including a glazed teapot. The wash-room contains two tubs, two pails, an old coal-hod, and an old basket, a heap of 'varieties' in one corner; and there is a broken step leading into the yard. The yard is about three times as large as the kitchen; there is a pile of broken crockery, bones, and odds and ends in one corner, a plentiful crop of thistles in another place, and a

great gap in the fence between the yard and a neighbor's. Will this do?"

"Oh!" said Jack, uncovering his eyes, "I can see the whole; what a lot I could do there with Tommy to help! but Frank will do better I dare say. What did Mrs. Brown say?"

"At first she seemed to think that nothing could be done. 'She couldn't be moved, and 'twa'n't no use, things would go to wrack again right off.' Then I asked her a little about her past life, and found out, that, when she was first married, she used to keep neat and clean; but, after a while, her trials begun, and, while 'he' was alive, 'twa'n't no use to try to keep things straight, so she gave it up. Then, when 'he' died, she was took sick, and all they could do was just to worry through; and, now that her leg was broken, she didn't see how they ever could get along. I talked about Tommy, and that roused her, and she began to feel interested, and said we might do what we pleased to the kitchen and yard, and that she was very grateful to Master Jack for his

interest. Now, *Master Jack*, after to-morrow, I am at your service. What shall we do?"

"Well," said Jack, with a very business-like air, "the first thing to be done is for me to find out the probable expense of the repairs needed, so that we shall not exceed our means; and then Frank will" —

"Frank has," interrupted his brother, "begun his work already. I took the measure of the broken step in the yard, and mean to fix that first, and then the gap in the fence. I told Tommy to take a basket, and carry off to a place, not far distant, the town is filling up preparatory to laying out a new street, the rubbish in the yard, advising him to keep the bones, and sell them."

"There!" said Jack, with a crestfallen expression. "I forgot entirely that I was to consult with you and Hannah, whether we should use the money for Mrs. Brown, or take it for that window we want so much in the shed. I hope you don't care much, either of you; for I'd rather help Mrs. Brown."

"And as the money is yours, and not ours,

Jack," said Hannah, "I don't see why you shouldn't do as you like with it, even if we do care; but, for one, I am very much interested in brightening up Mrs. Brown."

"And I also," said Frank: "so the good work shall go on, and Howard Grey is to help me paper, when we come to that part."

"All right, then: go ahead, Frankie, and I'll foot the bills; only mind, and see what you can do with ten dollars,—how much, I mean."

"Certainly; but I must ask father, first of all, whether I may use his pieces of board, nails, &c."

"Of course; because you know he never lets us take his consent for granted."

"And I must ask mamma how much of the cleaning process I may undertake, and who I shall get to do what I can't," said Hannah.

The next day Hannah spent with the Ashtons: and, although she and Helen mingled their regrets that they were not to pass the vacation together, they soon began to talk upon other subjects; and Hannah interested Mrs.

Ashton so strongly for Mrs. Brown, that she promised her a bundle towards the comfort of the bedroom. Many a bundle of Mrs. Ashton's had Hannah seen at her father's disposal, in aid of his poor patients; and her eyes sparkled with pleasure at the prospect of having the contents of one to appropriate herself. Then Mrs. Ashton gave her six little white aprons to make for the fair in the course of her vacation, which she gladly undertook. It did not seem much to her; for Mrs. Gordon, amongst other "old-fashioned ideas," thought no girl's training complete who did not know how to sew neatly. Helen promised to collect materials for baskets, frames, &c., while she was away, which they could make together after her return. But the thing that gave Hannah the most delight was a prettily bound volume of Natural History, illustrated with cuts, which Mrs. Ashton gave her to carry home for Jack, who was interested in such subjects. When she put it into his hands that evening, she said to him, laughing, "I suppose you won't call this a study book: will you?"

"No, indeed: I call it a pleasure book. How came Mrs. Ashton to give it to me? Seems to me everybody is very kind."

"So it seems to me," said Dr. Gordon; "and I am glad to find you are growing so much kinder to yourself than you were a little while ago."

"Kinder to myself! That's one of your funny notions, papa."

"Not at all. I call a little boy very unkind to himself who suffers himself to get fractious and impatient at what can't be helped."

"Oh!" said Jack, "I understand now: well, I WAS real cross and *contrairy*, but I don't mean to be any more; though, to be sure, I should have no excuse now, with all this work going on, and Hannah at home so much."

Dr. and Mrs. Gordon understood the gratified flush upon Hannah's face, as Jack said this; and, when they were alone, Dr. Gordon said, "I feel quite elated at the success of my plan: it has taken the surly out of Jack's face,

and as for Hannah, dear child, how bright and happy she looks! I think my moral tonic is working well."

"Yes, that it is; and you may be sure Mrs. Ashton knew, that, in getting that book for Jack, she was doing what would please Hannah far more than a direct gift to herself."

CHAPTER IX.

MORE RESULTS FROM DR. GORDON'S TONIC.

"I FEEL so much stronger," said Jack to his mother, two days after Dr. Gordon's happily devised plan had been spoken of, "that I think I can do something for Mrs. Brown myself. I can *almost* walk now, and my wrist is ever so much better."

"I am very glad that it is so; but you must be careful not to try and do too much, and put yourself back. One thing, though, you can do. I found this white vase in the closet; and, if you like, I will lend you my decalcomania materials, and you can ornament it at your leisure for Mrs. Brown's mantel-shelf."

"Oh, that will be jolly fun!"

Mrs. Gordon laughed, and said, "I shouldn't call it jolly fun, but every one to their own taste. Here are Frank and Hannah for orders."

"Orders and advice both, mamma," said Hannah,—"orders from Jack, advice from you."

"My orders are, to work as fast as you can, and make everybody else do the same."

"And my advice is," said their mother, "to work moderately, so that your undertaking will be a pastime, and not a weariness."

"May I not clean out the closet, sweep and dust the kitchen, and wash the windows, to-day, mamma?" asked Hannah.

"No, my dear: if you sweep and dust, and clean out the closet, that will do for to-day; to-morrow you can have Ann, Bridget's sister, to scrub and clean the paint, and you can wash the windows then, if you choose. Don't lift any thing heavy: Frank will do that for you."

"There's nothing heavy to lift but the cooking-stove; and I don't think that will need to be moved."

"I'm not so sure of that," said Frank. "I think I can have it placed where it will not take up the room it does now; but I've no

time to spend in talking. That's a sensible rig you have on, Hannah, to work in."

"Yes: you know I always have one rather dark calico dress, with short sleeves and sack, for a working-dress; and here's my big apron to put on when I get there. What have you got, Frank, — overalls?"

"Yes, and a linen sack. Good-by to you all. Don't forget to try and copy that head for me, Jack. If I work for you, you must do the same for me. I've a notion you'll do it very nicely."

A shade of discontent passed over Jack's face as Frank and Hannah went gayly to their work; but Sammy came in most opportunely, and soon set him off into laughing by his efforts to cross the floor without tumbling, which efforts resulted in sundry lurches and a final prostration at Jack's feet, after which Jack amused himself in sending him on little errands till he was tired of laughing. Then he asked his mother for the drawing materials, and commenced drawing, with his left hand, the head Frank had spoken of. He had a

taste for drawing, and, since he was disabled, had practised using his left hand. The time passed so quickly that eleven o'clock came before he was aware; and with it came Frank and Hannah, ready with their report.

Frank said that he had mended the step and fence, without a bit of expense, and that the first was now firm and safe; that he had also put on a new hinge to the door leading out of the kitchen, and had assorted some rubbish for Tommy to dispose of; and that he should wait for a cool evening, and then he meant to make a change, with Tommy's help, in that out place and yard that would astonish everybody. As for the stove, he must spend a little money for a bit of funnel for that, and for the time of the man who would put it in. If father could have seen the dust Hannah raised, he would have been more convinced than ever of the propriety of beginning with the broom. She looked like a very happy little witch, he said, flourishing her broom-stick, and with her hair tied up in a handkerchief.

"Yes; and you don't know, mamma, how

much better Mrs. Brown is. She says the pain has left her, and that, if she can be quiet and keep still a while longer, she believes she can use her leg soon. I hope Tommy will keep the closet clean till she gets about. It was dirty enough; but it was fun to see the dirt come out, and the shelves look so nice. She asked me what I was doing; and, when I told her, she said it was 'a shame for me to be cleaning up after an old, dirty woman like her; but, to tell you the truth, miss, I had kinder lost heart, and nobody seemed to care for me, but I dare say that was all my fault; now I mean to do better when I gets well, and make poor little Tommy's home pleasant for him; such a good boy as he is, too.'

"Dust! I guess there was dust enough back of the stove, and over the doors and windows, to — well, to make a pretty good-sized cloud. Frank declared he couldn't see me at first. We had such fun! I declare I believe I take a savage delight in cleaning up. What a very common little miss I must be, according to Eva Barton.

"Why?" asked Jack.

"Oh! she said one day she hated all housework, that no lady should ever drudge, and that, for her part, she thought it was a mark of a low mind to like to work. I thought to-day that I must have a very low mind according to her ideas; for I was ten times happier bringing out the shine at Mrs. Brown's than I was at her party."

"I should like to hear that little mass of hoops and flounces call *you* low-minded," said Jack excitedly.

"Hey day!" said Frank, "she didn't: so you needn't flare up about it."

"And even if she had, Jack," said his mother, "it wouldn't have made her so, you know; and it is foolish ever to care what a vain silly child like Eva says. She is more to be pitied than blamed.

"It seems to me this work is putting the shine on people as well as things. Who knows how much shine these ready hands, aided by Jack's ten dollars, will bring out from the heart into human faces. I know two at

home who have already gained in that respect, and I anticipate great pleasure in seeing Mrs. Brown when your work is all done."

"Shine into faces, out from the heart?" said Jack, "that must mean looking happy, and being happy; and I know what makes us happy; don't you, Hannah?"

"I know one thing that makes me happy particularly just now," was her answer, "and that is to be so busy helping others as to forget myself."

"That's it," said Jack, "I know; for, before this very jolliest plan in the world was thought of, I was all the time thinking about myself, wishing I could do this or that, and I felt mighty cross because I couldn't. Now I'm dreadfully impatient sometimes to be well, but I don't feel cross a bit."

"Speaking of shine," said Frank, with a merry twinkle in his eyes, "I think there's considerable of that latent element in Mrs. Brown's old stove, though it looks now as if a brush and itself had never met. I intend to see what I can do in that line to-morrow. It

will serve in place of a gymnastic exercise. Let's look at your drawing, Jack. No? Well, I can wait."

"It's well you can, sir, for never a look shall you have at my left-handed performance till it's finished. All geniuses, you know, work on for a while by themselves."

Early the next morning, Frank and Hannah started off again upon their labor of love, accompanied this time by Ann, a stout Irish woman, who expressed very decidedly her astonishment that master and miss should be willing to do such dirty work for "the likes of them."

"We don't call it work, Ann: we just make play of it," said Hannah.

"Play, is it? An' indade, thin, I wish jist ye'd come and do some of the same sort of play for me."

"But you are able to work, and Mrs. Brown isn't."

"Able, is it? so's she able enough, I'll warrant. I'd not mind taking to me bed awhile, if I could get rid of the work this hot weather."

"Well," said Hannah, laughing, "when you have a broken leg, just send for us, and we'll see what we can do for you; and now I want you to clear up just as nicely for Mrs. Brown as for mamma, and you know that's nice as can be."

"If you say so, I will; but indade, if the likes of her want claning done, she better do it for herself when she's on her legs. To look at the place, niver a bit of real scrubbing has been done for many a day."

Despite her grumbling, however, Ann, who was a real mistress of the art of cleaning, put out her will and strength in such a manner, that two hours' hard work sufficed to remove several shades of dinge and dirt from the paint, and prepare it for the new coat it was to have. Hannah, meantime, in spite of Ann's remonstrances, had washed and polished the two windows to such an extent of brightness, that the room looked as if a flood of light had been let into it. Frank was not idle. A man had brought in the requisite piece of pipe for the stove, and had changed its position

so as to materially increase both room and convenience; and then Frank had "set to," as he said, with a will, and astonished even himself at the polish he put upon it.

"We certainly are not quite as clean as Dr. Gordon's children might be, Hannah," he said at the close of his work, looking ruefully down upon his blackened overalls; "the worst of it is, I've worked so hard, I've met with an accident, and must wear these home whether or no."

"Oh, never mind; we'll slip round through Poplar Street, and nobody'll see us. If they do, there's a pair of us, at any rate; for I've both wet and torn my dress."

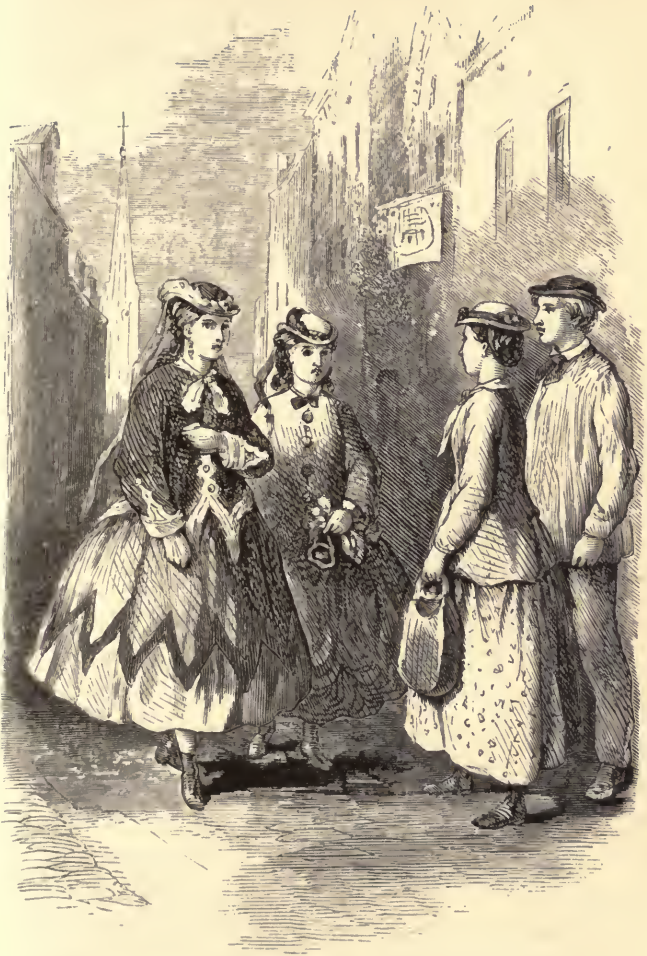
"It's jist me opinion, that I shall give axed or not, that ye're jist a piece with yer fayther, who's always been imposed upon, and slavin' himself for folks that ain't no gratitude about 'em. A jintleman's a jintleman, and so is his childer; and they've no occasion to be doin' common folks' dirty work for 'em. Yer fayther —bless his blue eyes and heartsome laugh—is jist, savin' yer presence, the asiest imposed-on

man a goin'. I'd be ashamed to be seen in the street wid yees myself, and yees Dr. Gordon's children too," said Ann, in a rapid burst of indignation.

"You needn't, Ann, for you've got to stay and finish the floor," said Hannah: "so we sha'n't disgrace you."

"Come, Frank, the sooner we're off the better. Good-by, Mrs. Mahoney," she added, laughing: "I hope you'll be better pleased the next time I see you. Don't go in to disturb Mrs. Brown: she had a bad night, and is trying to go to sleep."

Hannah did not wait to hear the epithets Mrs. Ann Mahoney bestowed upon poor Mrs. Brown, but ran off to overtake Frank, who had already started. They had nearly reached home, and had just turned into a short street, out of which there was no egress, except by turning back or keeping on; when, on the very same sidewalk upon which they were, they saw Eva Barton and Anna Blake coming towards them in full dress, and with the air of conscious importance which marked these young misses.



They saw Eva Barton and Anna Blake coming towards them. — Page 130.

"Oh!" said Hannah, under her breath, but with a volume of meaning in the simple interjection to Frank, who knew his sister's sensitiveness.

"There's nothing for it, Hannah, but to face the situation. Don't look as if you were ashamed of yourself."

"I declare," said Eva Barton to Anna, "if there isn't Frank and Hannah Gordon! What perfect frights! Let's cross over, and make believe we're going to Mrs. Dale's."

"Too late for that," said Anna. "For my part, I shall enjoy their mortification."

She had very little to enjoy, however; for Frank bowed in the most self-possessed manner as they passed, merely saying, "I am sorry that the nature of my morning's work prevents me from offering you my hand," while Hannah answered their cool nod with one as cool, and passed on.

"Not annihilated quite, Hannah?" said Frank, laughing heartily. "I don't much blame them, though. I'm afraid mother would be ashamed of us just now."

Frank was partly right; for they met their mother as they went into the house, and she at once exclaimed at their appearance. "You must manage to look neatly, at least, in the streets," she said; "but young workers are very apt to disfigure themselves in undertaking to renovate for other people."

"We've met our punishment already, mother," said Frank, putting on his gravest look. "We're fresh from an encounter with Miss Eva and Miss Anna. The air with which Anna kept her ample skirts from coming in contact with our poor Cinderella was amazing to me; but then I'm only a 'great overgrown school boy,' you know."

When the family met in the evening, in Jack's room, to consult as to the plans for the next day's work, Hannah gave an amusing account of Mrs. Mahoney's displeasure, and their meeting with Eva and Anna, much to Jack's amusement and indignation. Dr. Gordon laughed; but said he should advise a little more regard to appearance in the streets in the future, as cleanliness was next to godliness,

and in fact, in his view, very intimately associated with it.

Jack listened patiently as he could, till his father had concluded, and then said, "Now what's up for to-morrow?"

"What is to be done to-morrow," said Frank, with a significant emphasis upon the word done, "is first of all to buff-wash the walls of the kitchen. Then I have discovered a hole in the shed-floor, covered by a tub, and that I propose to mend with a piece of board, which is my own property; next, I shall drive up several large nails, for articles to hang upon, that have heretofore been thrown in a promiscous puddle in the floor. After Tommy has taken off his load of rubbish from the shed and yard, and swept the former, I intend to give it a final sweeping preparatory to Mrs. Mahoney's wet scrubbing with a broom. She informed me that she'd not get on her hands and knees to *clane* up *that* floor, for all the Mrs. Browns in Ameriky. So I meekly submit, where resistance availeth not."

"And as for me," said Hannah, "I am at a

complete stand, till Mrs. Brown can be moved. I do wish"—

"Wish what?" said her father: "if it is a reasonable wish, it shall be granted."

"Oh, it's no use telling it, I suppose; but I do wish that some good fairy would just take Mrs. Brown and Tommy, and carry them off to the country for a week or two. If we put her in the kitchen, all the shine'll be off there, before the rest is done; and then how's she going to be comfortable with that hot stove beside her bed?"

"Wouldn't a good woman answer your purpose as well as a good fairy?" asked Dr. Gordon; "because, if she would, I know a very good one who proposed just the plan you suggest this morning, and not only proposed it, but took instant measures to see that it was carried into effect."

"I know," said Jack; "it was mamma, and that was what you took your drive together about 'upon a little matter of business' this forenoon. Oh, how splendid! but then ten dollars won't fix up her house, and pay their board too?"

"Whose house? — your mother's? And whose board? Seems to me you are a little confused."

"Oh! you know just what I mean; but will it?"

"Not quite. The matter of paying the board is easily settled, as Mrs. Ashton left me her almoner while she was away. Mrs. Brown has an old friend, of whom she has spoken to me, living three or four miles out in the country, in Westville, in a cosey little house, where fresh air and sunshine are to be found. She gladly consented, at your mother's solicitation, to take Mrs. Brown and Tommy, for a reasonable consideration, to board. In a few days I think she can be moved, and then, young folks, you must make the most of your time; for I shall allow you but two weeks, from the time you commenced, to finish all your improvements."

"That's all, and more than all, we want," said Frank and Hannah together.

CHAPTER X.

PLAY-WORK.

"EIGHTEEN hours of hard work, mum, at fifteen cints an hour: that's two dollars and siventy cints, as I make it; and sure it's money hardly arned, too. That's what I have for claning in ladies' houses, where the dirt's not to be spoken of; but here, indade I've the pain in me shoulder, and sometimes in me heart since; for sure it was jist dirt upon dirt, and that's true for ye."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Gordon, to whom the above was addressed by Mrs. Ann Mahoney, "I don't doubt the work is well worth the money. I wasn't objecting to the price, only wondering if Jack could afford it. That of course makes no difference to you, and I will pay you at once, and then Jack can settle with me when he pays his other bills. You washed the bedding and all?"

"Indade I did that, an' it's many a long day since it was done afore; an' you know you said I was to sweep and dust and all, in the bedroom, an' so I did, laving nothing for miss, but to polish up the windys, more's the pity to let her do that same at all."

"All right, Ann, and I am sure the work is faithfully done, and you will be glad to know you've helped to make a poor woman comfortable."

"Indade, thin, an' I don't care for that at all: it's yerself I worked for. The woman's no good."

"I've paid the bill for you, Jack," said his mother, going back to his room, from whence she had been called to see Ann.

"Why did you? you know I am to pay all myself."

"It was larger than I supposed it would be, though none too large for the work Ann has done; and, as I prevented Hannah from doing all she wished to, I consider myself responsible for all over and above what you are able to pay. So let it rest, dear, till the other bills come in."

Dr. Gordon kept his word, and, in three days after the conversation in the preceding chapter, he carried Mrs. Brown out to Westville in a light easy wagon. After she had gone, Mrs. Ann Mahoney went to work with a will to get through her part of the "dirty job," with the result related above. Then came the white and buff washing, which Frank did by himself, with Charlie as waiter and spectator; next the papering, in which he was helped by Howard Grey and Hannah, the two boys putting on the paper, and Hannah applying the paste.

As they were working merrily together, one day, Howard said mischievously to Hannah, while Frank's attention was diverted to something else, "What's the use of all this hard work? I dare say, your Harry would foot the bills, if he knew about it."

"I dare say he would," said Hannah; "but you see I prefer to be independent."

"Oh, that's it, is it? I didn't know but there was another obstacle in the way.'

"There is; for forty Harrys to pay couldn't

make it half the pleasure that it is to do, or help do, this work myself. I've a positive mania for making things shine. See this lamp," she added, taking up Mrs. Brown's britannia lamp, which she had polished to look like silver: "it was as black — yes, quite as black as your shoe, when I took it in hand."

"But to return to Harry: who is he?"

"You know just as well as I do, Howard; and, as I told you the other day, you used to enjoy pretending about people and things just as much as I did years and years ago, when you wore sacks instead of jackets."

"So I did; but I've given it all up long ago, and supposed that you had done the same. I'm happy to know, however, that your acquaintance with 'Harry' is no greater than my own."

"Order there!" called out Frank. "I shall report you to our boss as idlers.

'Up, my comrades! up and doing!
Manhood's rugged play
Still renewing, bravely hewing
Through the world our way.'"

"Thanks for your reproof," said Howard, "though your poetical quotation seems a little wide of the mark: there's not much 'hewing' going on here!"

"O Howard Grey! you're as practical as Charlie, who will have every thing made literal to him to a letter," said Hannah. "I'm sure there's some moral hewing in doing all this work, if nothing more; and you see Whittier tells us work is, after all, nothing but—

'Manhood's rugged play;'

and that's just what we are trying to make out of this job."

"I stand corrected, Hannah. There's nothing to be done but for me to go back to the brook, and take 'fancy lessons' from my former teacher; for, as I remember, it was always you that suggested the ideas to which I gave assent."

"Time's up," said Frank; "no more talking till this room is papered."

He was obeyed by his ready aids, and the work progressed rapidly, not only that day, but

on those which followed; for Dr. Gordon had admonished them that their allotted time, two weeks, was nearly over, and that he had promised Mrs. Brown that she should come back the following week, if she wished to do so. Accordingly, papering, painting, and whitewashing was done by the young workmen as well and speedily as possible in the hours of each day which Dr. Gordon was willing that they should give to the work; and, when that was accomplished, Mrs. Ashton's bundle was opened, and found to contain a set of strong sheets and pillow-cases, a good bedquilt, furniture patch more than sufficient for bedspread and window-curtains, a small table cover, a good piece of strong, bright carpeting for the bedside, and a nice calico wrapper.

"Oh!" said Hannah, "I think I may call this *splendid.*"

"Not exactly, or its contents would never serve your purpose," said her mother.

"Well, then, it was *splendid* in Mrs. Ashton to send it."

"It was very kind certainly, to say the least."

"And the contents are all good and useful, and some of them, this painted cloth for instance, pretty," said Dr. Gordon.

"Well, I suppose I must come down to common words in expressing my feelings; but I assure you, they are quite inadequate to the purpose," said Hannah, with an air of mock resignation.

"It's a pity that Dr. Gordon won't let you say *splendid*, *sweet*, *lovely*, *elegant*, *superb*, and *gorgeous*, to a bundle of colored cloth," said Howard Grey, who was present.

"But common words are so tame in expressing one's feelings," said Hannah.

"Better be tame than incorrect in the use of language," said her father; "but what's to be done with this flowery stuff?"

"Oh! make a spread to cover the bed with in the daytime, and curtains for her windows, and — oh! I do wish we had a chair to cover too. Mamma, you can help us, I know."

"Thank you for your confidence in my resources. I will give you a barrel and some old cotton batting towards your chair. Frank,

Howard, and even Jack, can help in its manufacture. It can be done to-morrow in the work-room. I think Jack's wrist is strong enough for him to help in stuffing."

"You're almost equal in fancy to your daughter, ma'am," said Howard, laughing, "if you expect us to make a chair out of a barrel."

"Frank has lent a helping hand before in such a job, and will make it clear to you."

"And to-morrow must finish up the whole work," said Dr. Gordon; "at least, I can't spare Hannah to you any longer."

It was a busy and merry group — merry, perhaps because busy — that met in the young Gordons' shed-room, play-room, or work-shop, as it was called by turns. A veritable work-shop it proved this morning; for Howard and Frank were busy sawing out the front, shaping the back, and making a steady seat, while Mrs. Gordon sat by, helping Hannah upon the spread and curtains, ready to give a suggestion, when needed, about the chair that was to be. Jack waited impatiently for his part of

the work, having already selected the smoothest pieces of batting for the purpose. Prince Walter, whom Charlie was doing his best to amuse, gave manifest tokens of his approbation of proceedings which he evidently thought were got up for his special entertainment.

"Whew!" said Frank, suspending his labors for a moment to snap his fingers at the baby, "what thinks your little majesty of all this hubbub? It would be a good thing if we could only look inside of your little 'knowledgeable' head to see what's going on there. You look as if you were wiser than all the rest of us, and could impart some very artistic ideas as to this same chair, if you only *could* get them out of that little bobbing machine on your shoulders."

"Prince Walter's very well in his place," said Howard; "but, as he evidently can't or wont help us, please tell me what's to be done to the back of this to-be chair."

"Why, round it off gracefully down to the seat, — there, don't you see? — after that fashion."

"Grace and a barrel! What a juxtaposition!"

But when, at last, the finishing touch was put to the barrel-chair, even Howard was obliged to confess that it really was quite a good-looking affair; "comfortable too," said he, sitting down in it; and then, getting up and walking round it, and looking mischievously towards Hannah, "it really does look *sweet*."

"You've made a mistake there, sir," said Jack: "Hannah never does say *sweet* about any thing."

"I never said she did."

"No; but you looked it."

"Good-morning, Mrs. Gordon: I must go home. Your little prince there has read me through and through; and now if Jack, who has a tongue and can use it, has taken up the same office, it is incumbent upon me to retire before my thoughts are all exposed."

"Come to the court at four this afternoon, Howard: neither Jack nor baby will be there," said Frank.

Accordingly, the working trio, with Charlie

as supernumerary, went to Mrs. Brown's house in the afternoon, Dr. Gordon carrying the chair and various bundles in his wide buggy. He was not allowed to come in, however; Frank, at Hannah's bidding, standing sentinel to prevent his entrance.

"To-morrow morning, as early as is convenient, you and mamma and Jack, and all the rest, may come, but not now," said Hannah from the open window.

No report was made to Jack that night, and he did not ask for one; for it was understood that their two weeks' work was ready for inspection, and now he could use his own eyes in place of Hannah's word-pictures.

CHAPTER XI.

COMPOUND INTEREST, OR MORE.

ABOUT ten o'clock the next morning, Dr. Gordon found himself at leisure to carry Jack over to Mrs. Brown's renovated house. The rest of the family, with the exception of Sam and the baby, had already gone, that they might be there to welcome Jack.

"Now," said his father, lifting him carefully out, "lean upon me, and spare that lame foot as much as possible. If you remember Hannah's word-picture of the place, you will be able to appreciate the changes."

"I can see the rooms before me, just as she described them, dinge, dirt, and all."

"Very well, walk in then," and Dr. Gordon let Jack precede him into the bedroom, where Hannah stood at the door waiting to receive him.

"First of all, Jack, you must rest in *the*

chair," she said; and seating him in the barrel-chair, and then standing aside, she watched eagerly the pleased expression of his face, as he looked rapidly from one object to another. The room had been painted a light drab, and the ground of the wall-paper was the same color, while over it were vines of reddish-pink flowers with green leaves. In one corner stood a neat medium-sized bedstead, covered with the spread to match the curtains, which were drawn back to admit the light through the clear window-panes. Upon the little table beside the bed was the cloth Mrs. Ashton had sent; and on it lay a well-worn Bible, which showed that at least the good book was read, even if Mrs. Brown had failed to apply all its teachings to her daily life. Beside it was a hymn-book, in which Mrs. Ashton had written Tommy's name. The chairs had been mended and painted the color of the wood-work, and Howard Grey had embellished them around the seat and upon the back with green and red lines, to match the paper on the walls. The mantel-

shelf shone in its new coat of black paint and varnish; a pretty engraving of a party of hay-makers in the fields, the gift of one of Dr. Gordon's friends, hung over the centre of it; and the bright lamp, the pretty vase, and the large shells completed its adornment. An almost empty set of book-shelves rested upon a pine bureau, stained to resemble black walnut. Jack took in the whole, and made a resolution that at least one shelf should be filled before another day.

"I like it," said he. "I am sure you deserve the credit of it far more than I do, all of you."

"I am not so certain of that," said his father; "there were so many things, dear to a boy's heart, ten dollars would have bought. No, no, Jack; you shall have a full share of the merit."

"Let us proceed to the commissary department," said Howard: "here is a *love* of a kitchen."

Clean and bright the table shone, with that clear whiteness that showed Mrs. Mahoney had bestowed her best efforts to reclaim it, and the

stove opposite had a glossy blackness which did full credit to Frank's strong arms; the neatly painted floor, the open closet-door, revealing the perfection of order and neatness within, all combined to give a pleasant picture of order and cleanliness.

"Do not exhaust yourself upon the kitchen," said Frank: "as to me, the porch and yard are equal signs of our genius," opening the door as he spoke. The rough floor had been scrubbed clean, the little window was clear, various articles of use hung upon nails, and the tubs and pails were neatly arranged. The yard was free from dust or mud; one unsightly corner of it, where the rubbish had been, was protected by a rough lattice which Frank had made, and was even now partly covered with a Madeira vine, which he had transplanted so carefully as not to retard its growth.

"Well done, Frank!" said Dr. Gordon: "like father, after all. I enjoy the neat aspect of these out-places more than the flowery adornment of bed and windows, though they are well in their places, I dare say. I shall drive you out

to-morrow, Jack, to see when Mrs. Brown is ready to come back and take possession; and I propose that Mrs. Gordon should give her a hint or two as to the propriety of keeping the shine you have all worked so hard to give. You've all done well in this work of renovation; and I hope and I believe also that you have done a good beyond our power to estimate. Little Tommy's whole future in life may — indeed, I have faith to believe will — be altered and improved by the new impulse your kindness will, I am sure, give to Mrs. Brown. As for yourselves, why, if happy faces show happy hearts, you have done yourselves good too. What is it, Jack?"

"I was going to ask the boys to give some of their *good* old books to Tommy. I can spare some of mine, if mamma is willing, and I want Tommy should have one row at least."

"I'll engage to furnish ten," said Howard.

"And I ten or less," said Frank.

"And I *some*," said Charlie. "I must look them over first."

"And I *some* too," said Hannah.

"One thing more, mamma," said Jack: "can't we put something in the closet for Mrs. Brown to eat? It must be dismal to come back to empty shelves."

"Yes, dear, I thought of that, and have the promise of some aid there beside what I can do myself."

"I've nothing more to propose then," said Jack, "except that we go home and rest. The work we've done is good, and you're all good; and, according to father and the dictionary, there's nothing more to be said about it."

The next morning, Dr. Gordon drove Jack out to Westville, and made arrangements to come for Mrs. Brown and Tommy on Tuesday of the next week.

When that day came, bread, crackers, cold meat, and a small supply of tea, sugar, and butter, were placed on the shelves of the closet, the kitchen fire was lighted, the tea-kettle was boiling, the table was set, the wrapper was laid across a chair in the bedroom, the curtains were drawn aside, letting in the pleasant sun, and showing two of Tommy's

shelves filled; and, when Dr. Gordon drove up, he helped Mrs. Brown out, and left her and Tommy to go in and enjoy by themselves the changes that had been made.

Tommy was wild with joy as he capered from bedroom to porch, and back again, and was sorely discomfited and astonished, to see his mother, after one survey of her premises, sit down in her stuffed chair, cover her face with her hands, and cry like a child.

"O mammy, mammy! what is it? don't you like all these pretty new things, and this nice, nice place?"

All she could do for some time was to sob out, "Too much, — I don't deserve it."

"Yes, you do, you dear, good mammy, — we'll keep it nice: wont we? that's the best way to show Jack how we thank him."

After she became a little more composed, Mrs. Brown drew Tommy towards her, and said, "No, Tommy, I don't deserve to have all this done for me; but I will, God helping me, I *will* keep this a pleasant and happy home for you, from this time forth;" and, clasping

her boy still closer to her, she lifted her heart in silent and grateful prayer to the Giver of all good, beseeching for strength and help in the hour of temptation and trial.

That evening Mrs. Gordon came to see her, and again the distress of the morning came over the poor woman; but it was soon dispelled by Mrs. Gordon's kind and sympathetic words.

"You see, ma'am, when *he* was alive, he went on such a rig, that it took all the heart out of me. All his wages went for drink, and the children — I had three then — often were cold and hungry, for I was never rugged, and couldn't do hard work. Well, first he died, and then my two little girls, pretty creturs, ma'am, as you'd wish to see, got a fever and died; then I had the fever and 'most died too, and I believe all the courage and faith went out of my heart; and since I've only had life enough jest to keep us from starving; but I see now how cruel I've been to Tommy, who was always good and loving; and I know I shall be a better woman, now that my eyes have been opened; for if a stranger, like your

boy, is willing to do so much for him, what ought not his own mother to do? Poor fellow, he knows what is right. It was only to-day that he said the best way to thank your boy was to keep nice. When we say your boy, we mean all of you; for Tommy has told me how you all helped."

"The work my children have done for you has been a pleasure, and will do them as much good as it can do you, if they find it has really and truly helped you. If you should, however, fall back into your old careless ways, it would discourage them from like attempts in the future; so I know that, with the double motive to do right, you will keep to your resolution. And now let us talk of your future plans."

It is sufficient for the purpose of this story, to say, that Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. Ashton, and other kind friends put Mrs. Brown in the way of earning a comfortable support, by plain sewing and fine ironing, both of which she was competent to do.

In talking over their fortnight's work, after

its happy consummation, the Gordons all agreed that it had been one of great happiness.

"Always excepting, Hannah, your encounter with the 'girls,'" said Frank, laughing.

"I don't care a bit for that now; to be sure, I wasn't very clean and whole, but I got my dirt and rags in a good cause. You know the worst-looking soldiers had the most honor after the war. One grateful look of Tommy's was more than a compensation for 'the girls'' contempt."

"Yet I dare say, you would be greatly annoyed at similar treatment even now," said her mother.

"I know I should at the time, but I shouldn't keep thinking about it, and making myself unhappy, as I used to do."

"That is a great gain, to be sure. Sometime you will cease to care at all for such things."

"Frank has presented his bill, papa, and I suppose I am to pass it to my banker?" said Jack.

"Certainly. Give it to me. Ah! this is it."

JACK GORDON,	TO FRANK GORDON, DR.
To papering one room	$2.00
„ painting two rooms	4.00
„ buff and white washing	.75
„ cleaning two rooms	1.50
„ washing bedding	1.20
„ funnel and labor	.75 — $10.20

"Pretty good calculation, though I agreed for only ten dollars."

"I'm responsible for the twenty cents," said Mrs. Gordon. "That's owing to Mrs. Mahoney's bill being a little larger than I anticipated."

"Very well, keep to your responsibilities; though, if your purse isn't equal to the drain, I'll lend it to you."

"I know something better than that," said Charlie. "I haven't done much, because the work that I could do Tommy could do too, and Frank said it was best that he should: so please let me give the twenty cents."

"Certainly, if you wish," said his mother.

"I shouldn't be surprised, Jack, if you find, at the end of a year, that your ten dollars has given you more than compound interest in one way," said Dr. Gordon.

"Why, as to that, if you are going to reckon interest in pleasure, instead of dollars and cents, I think I've got more than compound interest already."

"And at that rate," said his father, "perhaps the whole amount at the end of the year will be as startling as the sum of those proposals to pay a person one cent a day, and go on doubling the sum every day for — well to keep within bounds, I'll say a month."

"And I think that money value never can be used to represent heart value or happiness," said Mrs. Gordon.

"We talked about shine on material objects and on human faces in the first of this work. Little Tommy's face has a shine upon it almost oppressive when you think how little money and labor and good-will it took to evoke it; and as for *some* faces at home, that were once, to speak gently, unhappy and sad, we have an amount of radiance that is heart-warming."

"Oh!" said Jack, "I know you mean *cross* looks. Well, I know I was aw — very cross

sometimes. But that was because I didn't think much about anybody but one Jack Gordon. He may be a good enough chap in his place, but his place isn't to be for ever spinning round in my head as he was at one time. It was just this way. It's very hard for poor Jack to be laid up here when other boys are playing, and having such a jolly time in vacation. He ought to be having a first-rate time too, on his uncle's farm, riding, boating, berrying, playing, and eating. Then there would be the horses and cows and oxen, and hens and chickens and all sorts of fowls, to watch, and the eggs to hunt for, and the omelets to eat, and the milk to drink, and the woods and fields to ramble about in, and so on; and then round and round the same thoughts would spin about my brain, till I got *desperate* cross, I do believe; and I dare say I was just what Hannah called me one day,—a very discontented pendulum indeed. Then came this jolly plan (I *must* say jolly) of papa's; and, presto, what a change! *Out* of Jack Gordon's head spun himself, and *into* it

Tommy Brown, and his poor home, and his sick mother; and the more spinning round there was in that direction, the happier grew that same Jack. No, I don't believe ten dollars ever did give such a heap of pleasure before; and, as to the good it has done and will do, why, it takes papa's moral arithmetic to reckon it; and, according to mamma, even that fails."

"Well done, Jack!" said his father, when he stopped at last, fairly out of breath.

"There's one thing I should like to know," said Charlie in his most practical manner; "and that is, if we are never to spend any money for our own pleasure, because it seems to me we ought not, if it is going to do so much good to other people."

"That's a question I will answer another time, my boy," said Dr. Gordon.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SEASHORE.

"I'M really afraid, mamma, that the vacation will be over before I'm half through my work. The two first weeks seemed to fly. I've a great deal planned to do, you know," said Hannah Gordon, as she sat sewing in her mother's room.

"I'm glad you have a plan, my dear. 'Order is Heaven's first law;' and I never yet saw a girl or woman get on very successfully in life who had no method. But what are your numerous duties?"

"First, you know I have my every-day work, which is to dust the parlor and sitting-room, and arrange the flowers, take care of my own room, and help you in any thing you may require. Then comes the hour's practising, a walk with Jack in the garden, then our draw-

ing lesson; and after that I read to him if he's tired, or sit and sew, and talk with him. In the afternoon, I have my fair-work to do, more practising, the little ones to amuse — a walk to take, and sundry other things to fill in. Jack's getting on nicely with his drawing, and we have plenty to amuse ourselves with. I think Jack's ever so much improved since he was sick: don't you, mamma?"

"Yes, I do; but I doubt if the improvement would have been quite as manifest, if there had not been improvement in other quarters also. I don't think Jack and a certain person who shall be nameless will ever be at 'swords' points' again: *of course*, I mean nothing personal."

Hannah laughed, and went on chatting gayly with her mother, till they were interrupted by the entrance of Bridget, who announced the arrival of "a new trunk, mum; and where shall it be put?"

Mrs. Gordon looked up surprised, and Bridget said, "Oh! indade it's just marked plain with *somebody's* name."

"Very well, have it put in *somebody's* room, then."

"It's Frank's, I suppose," said Hannah. "I'll run up and look at it. I do so like to see spick-and-span new things!"

Hannah ran up, but she almost flew down breathless to her mother.

"O mamma! it's *mine*, my very own, a nice brown trunk, all studded with bright nails, and my name, 'Hannah Gordon,' marked in full on the lid. It's just as nice and convenient as can be. Dear me! I shall want to go on a journey right off. Do you know who sent it?"

"Is there no card within to tell that important fact?"

"I didn't see any; I'll look once more;" and up and down went Hannah, in the same rapid fashion as before, bringing with her a card, upon which was written, "Hannah Gordon, from Aunt Mary."

"What shall I do with my trunk, papa?" said Hannah, as they all sat together at the dinner-table.

"Fill it, child, with strong, comfortable wearing apparel, suited to the seashore, with one or two dresses for great occasions. You must put your wardrobe in order yourself, unless you have new clothes to make; and you must pack your trunk yourself also, under mamma's supervision of course, and then — why, then, I think I shall send mamma, Prince Walter, Sarah the nurse, Hannah, Jack, and Sam off to the seashore for a fortnight."

"And you, papa, and Frank and Charlie, and the little ones."

"Bless me, how we *do* count up when the roll is called! I am going to answer Charlie's question the other night, as to the propriety of ever spending any money for our own pleasure, by sending him to rusticate upon his uncle's farm, while mamma is away. Aunt Mary has borrowed the little ones to take into the country with her; and Dr. Gordon and Frank Gordon jun. will remain at home to enjoy, under Bridget's care, a little quiet and rest."

Exclamations of "How nice!"—"How pleasant!"—"How good!" and "I'm so glad!" came from one and another. Mrs. Gordon and Hannah alone were silent.

"How's this?" asked Dr. Gordon. "I didn't expect Mrs. Gordon to be pleased with her banishment; but I did expect you, Hannah, to be delighted at the opportunity of using your new trunk."

"And so I am, papa; but you need rest and change more than any of us but mamma."

"Need perhaps; but cannot take it, my dear, and you can. I have patients whom I cannot leave. Beside, I shall get rest when my noisy tribe are away. When you all come back, you will hardly know which is Frank sen., and which is Frank jun."

"Hannah is right," said her mother; "you do need rest, far more than any of us, and then the expense"—

"Is provided for," said Dr. Gordon. "Years ago, I was able to lend a helping hand to a young man, and now the bread cast upon the waters is returned to me; for he is compara-

tively prosperous, owns a small farm at the seashore, half a mile this side of Darrow Beach, and he will gladly take you to board for a very reasonable sum, which I am quite able to pay. He wanted very much that you should come only as visitors, alleging that he owed me more than he could ever repay. Of course I would not listen to that plan, but I was willing to pay them only a moderate board. It's the very place for Jack to get his strength and color back again, and, in fact, for you all; and though," looking, as he spoke, at Charlie, "I do not think it is right to spend money extravagantly or foolishly for ourselves when there are so many of our fellow-creatures suffering for the bare necessaries of life, I *do* think it is right to afford recreation that is sure to bring a return of increased health and strength."

A fortnight later found part of Dr. Gordon's family established at Mr. Hanly's comfortable farmhouse, where they were welcomed cordially, and every effort made to ensure their comfort and happiness. Mrs. Gordon had her anxieties, which prevented her full enjoyment

of the change; but she rejoiced in the manifest benefit it was to Hannah and Jack, and in the happiness which it gave them. But for them, she would have preferred to be at home; for she knew that it was an unusually sickly season in Wellwood, and she knew, too, that Dr. Gordon had long been overtaxing his strength. In answer to her entreaties that he would give himself a little recreation, he invariably said, "I cannot leave my post just now, even if my life is the forfeit I pay for remaining: give me, then, the relief of knowing that you are all happy and safe."

Although Jack could not walk to Darrow Beach, as his ankle was still weak, Mr. Hanly often took him and Hannah there on his way to the nearest village, where he did his marketing. Then there was a little strip of beach near the house, upon which they spent many hours, watching the ever-changing play of the waters, gathering pretty-colored stones, shells, and mosses. As Jack grew stronger, he was able to go on berrying parties with Joseph Hanly, a boy near his own age, and to help in

raking the second crop of hay, and other light farm-work; and with increase of health came back his abounding spirits, and love of adventure. Some boys of his acquaintance from Wellwood were staying with their parents at the hotel at Darrow Beach; and one morning, when Jack drove over there with Mr. Hanly, they urged his joining a water party, which was to go down some six or eight miles to Darrow Point, to fish, have a chowder, &c.

"Oh, yes! I should like it of all things," said Jack; "but I must ask mother, and, besides, you must tell me all about the number of the party, the size of the boat, and who is to take charge of her, or mother will not let me go."

"Pooh, what a Miss Molly!" said one of the boys, Alfred Barton, Eva Barton's brother, "that's just like a woman, always fussing and wanting to know about every thing."

"Very well," said Jack, red with anger at the implied slight to his mother; "you can give me the information or not, as you like: I sha'n't go without it."

The information was given, and sounded very satisfactory; but, when Mrs. Gordon consulted Mr. Hanly as to the safety of the expedition, he said, "Mr. Cross takes parties out constantly from the hotel; but he has the reputation of being a very venturesome sailor, and, just at this season of sudden showers, I should prefer not to have a friend of mine with him."

"Would you let your own boy go?"

"Certainly not; but then I may be over cautious. To tell the truth, I had a narrow escape myself once from being drowned on one of these parties; and I know too much of the real danger of such expeditions."

"That settles it, Jack," said his mother pleasantly, but firmly; "your father told me, in any case in regard to you in which I was doubtful, to be guided by Mr. Hanly, in whose judgment he had great confidence. I am *very* sorry to disappoint you, Jack," she continued; "but I cannot give my consent."

Jack made no reply. He was too well trained in habits of implicit obedience to do

that; but he looked very sulky and dissatisfied, and went off by himself. An hour later, Hannah went down to the beach, and found him sitting on a rock, tracing figures in the sand, moody and cross.

"It's too bad," he said; "I wonder if I'm always to be kept at home like a baby. Of course there isn't the least danger in the world. Mr. Cross goes out three or four times a week with parties."

"Mr. Hanly advised mamma as he thought best, and she followed his advice, as papa told her to do. I don't see how you can feel so about it, Jack."

"Of course you don't: girls or women don't know how a boy likes to go on the water, or" —

"Or have his own way," said Hannah, laughing. "Well, Jack, make the best of it, and don't trouble mamma; you know how she dislikes to refuse you."

"Here they come, I know by the blue pennant which belongs to the boat. Oh, how splendidly she goes, and what a jolly, jolly time they'll have! Oh dear, dear!"

So it did seem as the pretty little craft sailed by, almost within hailing distance, on her way to the point, her white sail set, her blue pennant, and a flag bearing the dear old stars and stripes, dearer far than before it had been consecrated by waving over so many battle-fields in the cause of freedom and justice, streaming out on the breeze, 'walking the water like a thing of life,' with the blue sky overhead, without fleck or cloud to hide the joyous sun shining over all.

So it did seem then as if even a boy's superlatives could not more than express the promised delights of the trip. Jack threw himself on the sand, hiding his face in his hands, while Hannah watched the boat till it was a mere speck on the horizon.

Eight hours later, and what did Jack Gordon see from his mother's window, which faced the beach?

The same pretty little craft struggling bravely, as if her frame was a conscious one, with the elements; for a fierce and sudden thunder-gust had arisen, the sky was heavy

with black and leaden clouds, and the angry waves reared their crests as if bent upon overwhelming the boat.

Mr. Cross was evidently trying to make for the little strip of beach before Mr. Hanly's door, and for a little time it seemed as if he would succeed; but — one fiercer gust of wind came, which shook the house in its fury, and then — the blue pennant and the glorious stars and stripes touched the water, disappeared — and the boat, and its precious freight of human lives, went down before their eyes.

Mr. Hanly had seen the danger, and was ready with his boat and man to put off to their rescue, though at the risk of their own lives. But alas! of the ten who had sailed by in the morning the envy of Jack, but four were rescued from the water, and one of this number, Alfred Barton, was too far gone to be restored to life.

As Jack watched with breathless eagerness Mr. Hanly's attempts to save their lives, as he saw but four were found, and as he recognized Alfred Barton in the lifeless form beneath the

window, he once more covered his face with his hands, crying out this time in piteous accents, "Mother, mother!"

Perhaps no human skill could have saved them; but Barret, the man who had gone out to help Cross manage the boat, and who was one of those saved, said that the squall came up when they were half way between Darrow Point and Darrow Beach, and that Cross, in in his usual venturesome spirit, refused to slacken sail, saying that the wind favored them, and they could run in by Hanly's with perfect safety.

Barret had remonstrated in vain, and the result was such as has been related, and six lives, including that of Cross, paid the penalty of his rashness.

Dr. Gordon came down to Mr. Hanly's the next morning; and, when Jack met him, his father saw at once that something more than the disaster, terrible as it was, troubled him. When he learned that, but for Mr. Hanly's advice, Jack would have been one of the party, he could hardly find words to express his gratitude.

"But, father," said Jack, "mother has not told you how badly I behaved about not going. Hannah knows."

"You have had a hard lesson, then, my son, upon the duty of implicit and cheerful obedience, that will perhaps be of lifelong service to you. I shall add to it only this simple word: God would never have ordained the relation of parent and child, had he not intended that the child should be guided by the parent. This is a self-evident fact, but still one that it seems needful to impress upon the minds of the young. Poor Mrs. Barton came down in the train with me, and her grief was uncontrollable. I am told that she was very unwilling that Alfred should join the party; but he overruled her objections, so that she gave a reluctant consent. My dear Jack, let your mother's wishes be sacred to you."

"O father! I shall never, never forget this. Poor, poor Alfred! I suppose he wasn't the best boy in the world, because he was wilful, and never did pay much heed to his mother's wishes; but he was kind-hearted, on the whole, and so full of fun; and now" —

Here Jack broke down again, and his father drew him towards him soothingly, and said, "And now, Jack, he is in his Heavenly Father's care. There we may safely leave him."

That evening, Dr. Gordon went down with Hannah to her favorite seat on the little strip of beach she, with Jack, had come to regard as their special property.

After talking over the sad event of the preceding day, Dr. Gordon said, "Jack takes this very much to heart. Was he very rebellious to his mother's wishes?"

"He didn't say much, but he was dreadfully disappointed. I pitied him; and, to tell the truth, papa, I thought mamma was over-anxious."

"I dare say you did: good and sensible a girl as you are in the main, Hannah, you have caught the spirit of the age, which is a spirit of great self-assertion and independence on the part of the young, — a spirit, too, and that is one of its worst features, of criticism by children upon their parents' acts and lives. This habit destroys all true reverence and

filial affection. I do not say it destroys all affection, — only filial affection. The sooner Jack or any young person learns to have faith in parental love and judgment, the better it will be for him or them. But I am not going to give you a lecture on the failings of the young. I rather wish to thank you for the sacrifices you have made for Jack, and to tell you that I believe you will, in the future, be amply repaid for them."

"Sacrifices, papa! what do you mean? I am sure it has become a positive pleasure to me to be with him, he is so kind and affectionate."

"Yes, I dare say; and I dare say it has proved a pleasure to you, that you gave up for him the journey to the White Mountains with your friends, the Ashtons."

"O papa! who could have told you? I didn't mean you should ever know it."

"But I did know it, almost as soon as you knew it yourself."

Hannah paused a moment, and then said, "It was very kind of you, papa, to leave

me free to decide myself. But who told you?"

Dr. Gordon told Hannah how he had heard of the plan, and then said, "Have you ever repented your choice?"

"Never for a moment *repented*, but at first it was a little hard to forget, as I tried to do; but the work you gave us, papa, *that* was a real help to me, and to Jack too. I don't know as I could have kept him from fretting as he got stronger; and then, you know, I should have felt as if I had lost my pleasure in vain."

"As it is, you must see what an influence you have gained over him, — dear, impulsive, well-meaning, but often wrong-doing, Jack! What a mine of true affection you have opened in his heart since our talk before your birthday, when you labored under the delusion that he cared for nothing so much as teasing! Ah, Hannah, it is one of the blessed realities of life, that, as we go on in our daily routine of duty, we are continually finding true riches. Confess, my dear, that, in your heart, there

has been, even if there is not now, a lurking discontent that we are not rich in worldly goods."

"Why, yes, papa, I dare say there has been. I don't see how people can help wanting to be rich, even if they don't care for riches for themselves. So much good can be done with money, and one can't help thinking of nice things one wants."

"That's true: I am far from undervaluing the power of money for good. I only wish to convince you that there are riches within the reach of us all that are of priceless worth. We all have household mines that will yield us an immortal revenue, if we will but work them as earnestly and faithfully as we labor for a compensation in dollars and cents. What a rich return you have had in the little space of three months, for your increased kindness to and patience with your younger brothers and sisters!"

"Yes, indeed, papa; I did not think I could ever come to *enjoy*, as I now do, being with Jack, or amusing the younger ones. I thought

I would try and do as you wished, because I knew that it was right; and I have found it a happiness too." Still, I do get impatient, *inside;* dreadfully so, sometimes. You mustn't think I'm so very good all at once."

"No danger while you carry that honest telltale face on your shoulders."

"But, papa"—

"Well, dear?"

"Please *don't* tell Jack about my staying at home for him. I don't believe it would do any good, and it might make him feel badly."

"Certainly I will not at present, if such is your wish. I shall tell him some time."

Dr. Gordon strolled back to the house, thinking, as he went, of life in his own home, and life as he could judge of it in Mrs. Barton's family, who were now in such great sorrow, vainly groping about for light and comfort.

"Yes," he thought, "I, too, should like the power and influence money gives; but then how can I be sure that my heart would not be hardened, or my means spent for self-indul-

gence? and then, when the winds blew, and the rain fell, I, too, should discover that my house was built upon the sand. Just now money would do a great deal, not only for me and for those near and dear to me, but for my suffering sick and disabled: but the good God knoweth best; and, in that faith, let me abide content, ay, more than content, with my home and its treasures."

Hannah remained sitting where her father had left her; and presently she heard footsteps which she knew to be Jack's.

"Hannah!" he said.

She looked up surprised, for there was something unusual in the sound of his voice.

"I say, Hannah, why did you stay at home for me — you — I — I didn't deserve this from you. Why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't want to tell you, and I'm sorry that you know any thing about it, and I'm glad I did it. I didn't think I should be so glad as I am. Shall I tell you why I am so?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, I've found you out; and then

we've had such a *good* (papa's *good*, you know) time, working for Mrs. Brown, all the mountains in the world couldn't have given me so much pleasure as that did. They'll keep for another chance, you know. Besides, we have this beautiful seashore visit too: I'm more than satisfied with the change."

"What do you mean by finding me out?"

"Perhaps I can't make you understand about it, because boys don't care for such things as girls do, I suppose; but I've found out that you do care a good deal for me, and that is better for me than many journeys."

Jack choked something down, and said, "Boys don't like to make a fuss and talk about such things; but I guess, Hannah, they like to be cared for, as you call it, as well as girls; at least, I know I do. Well, I can't tell you just how I feel about your staying at home for me, and never letting me know, any way, that you had done it, because there's a queer feeling in my throat when I try to do it: but I sha'n't forget it; and when I feel cross, or want to do

any thing that other boys do that isn't quite right, I'll just remember this."

"No great merit in my not telling you of it, Jack: I didn't want the credit of eating a crust of bread," said Hannah, laughing.

"It was real mean in me to say that."

"No, I guess not: I remember I *did* think I was a little better than the rest of you, and you were sharp enough to see it; and your bringing it up at different times when I had done something pretty good, or self-denying, was the best thing in the world for me. So don't let's talk any more about these things, but go to the house, and prepare these mosses that I promised Helen to get for our work."

CHAPTER XIII.

CHANGES.

"HERE we are, all the Gordons home again," said Jack, the first evening they all met after their summer's excursions, — "mother, baby, baby's nurse, Hannah, Sam, and myself from the seashore; Charlie from his farm; Em and El from the country. Aren't you glad to see us, father, and you too Frank?"

"More than glad," said Dr. Gordon, hugging still closer Ella, who was perched upon his knee. "Part of the time, Frank and I thought we had too much of a good thing, — quiet."

"Poor papa!" said Ella, stroking his cheek with her little soft hand.

"Why *poor* papa? I feel like a very rich papa with all my household treasures home again."

"Oh, oo said oo couldn't run or jump, 'cause oo was tired. Auntie oughter take you away too."

"Perhaps I shall take myself away soon, if mamma is willing: I'm too big for auntie to manage. But we will talk this over another time: now I must hear of all your adventures by field, forest, and flood."

"'Sips and waty' is all you'll get out of Sammy," said Jack, laughing. "I believe he has said nothing else for a month, unless he was hungry and wanted mil — cackey!"

"And Ella has a wonderful cow story to tell," said Charlie; "as for Emma, berries seem to be her hobby; and for me, papa, I've made up my mind to be a farmer: so you must send me to an agricultural college, if you please, when I am old enough."

"Pooh," said Jack, "what a tame life! I mean to be a merchant, not a stay-at-home one; but I want to go abroad and get rich, and come home and take care of all the rest of you, and have Hannah to keep house for me."

"Thank you," said Frank; "but I, for one, hope to take care of myself."

"I dare say you may in time, though doctors don't get rich in a hurry: do they, father?"

"That depends upon their money-making capabilities a good deal, I believe," said Dr. Gordon, laughing. "I never was much of a proficient in that line."

"I know one reason why," said Charlie, very positively; "it's because you won't make out bills against poor folks: I heard Aunt Maria say so."

"Mother doesn't tell us what she did at the seashore," said Frank.

"I rested to my heart's content. Hannah and Jack took all the care of Sammy from me; Walter was good with Sarah; and I sat by my window, read or sewed, or looked out upon the water, with a sense of freedom from care, that I haven't known for a long time. Not that I hadn't my anxieties," she added, looking at her husband as she spoke.

"Frank took the best of care of me, and I

tried to do the same by him. We read when we wished to, played chess when we felt like it, *tead* out when invited, and for the rest did our work with brave hearts," said Dr. Gordon.

"I can see traces of Frank's work, in many places in the house and garden," said Mrs. Gordon; "as for yours, I am told that you have been very successful in the dreadful fever cases that have been so prevalent."

"Yes: I have been, and now I begin to feel the re-action: so I must be allowed to be lazy a while. Those of you who have had your holiday must go to work in earnest. School begins to-morrow."

"I'm glad enough for one," said Jack; "and, thanks to the seashore and Mr. Hanly, I'm as strong as anybody now."

A week later found every thing restored to its usual routine in Dr. Gordon's family; the bright faces and merry voices of the children giving full evidence of the good their summer's recreation had done them.

But Dr. Gordon did not gain from the rest

he was obliged to take; and it was soon apparent to his wife and friends, that the strong, untiring man was fairly broken down with hard work, and that nothing but an absolute change in his mode of life would save him. But what was to be done? where should he go? It was hard enough to leave his family; but to leave them, and go among strangers, was harder still. A warm climate was always debilitating to him, and now his system needed bracing. All at once it occurred to him that he had an old college friend living in Minneapolis, Minn., and that he might be induced to give him a resting-place for a few months. This plan pleased Mrs. Gordon, who was very unwilling to have him leave her, without a prospect of a pleasant home.

A favorable answer was returned to his request, and arrangements were immediately made for his departure. It was now, in their hour of trial, that Hannah saw how rich they were in friends, and how high her father stood in public estimation. Friendly visits, proffers of aid, and gifts delicately bestowed, came in

abundance. One gentleman in Wellwood, with whom Dr. Gordon had very little personal acquaintance, who owned several houses in the sickly district where Dr. Gordon had worked so faithfully, begged, as a great favor, his acceptance of two hundred dollars; "not," he wrote, "that I regard this as in the least an equivalent for services, many of them gratuitously rendered, by which you have made the whole town your debtor, but as a token of my grateful appreciation of the same." Other notes and other gifts, of similar tenor and smaller value, came, until, at last, Dr. Gordon fairly broke down under the weight of kindness. Tears came into his eyes; and he said to his wife, "It is pleasant to be appreciated, Margaret; but it almost humiliates me to feel that simply doing my duty — and I have done nothing more than that — should give rise to such expressions of interest and sympathy. Can it be that cases where men strive to do what is right, still falling far short of the Saviour's example, are so very rare, that, when man does what he ought, he is made almost a saint of?"

"Men's ideas as to duty differ, and it is not every one who has such as yours, Frank," she replied; "and I should not feel oppressed by your friends' expression of the estimation in which you are held. It is very gratifying to me, and I do not feel that it is undeserved. If you have never striven for gold, it is but right you should have love and esteem."

"The best riches are mine, I have always felt, little as I merit them; and now these timely gifts come in well to aid in defraying my expenses."

"Children," said Dr. Gordon, as they were all assembled together the evening before his departure, "I leave mamma and baby in your care, while I am gone. Even Sammy can do something to help her; and I know that she is in good hands. As to yourselves, you know my wishes and my prayers in your behalf; and I need not now dwell upon them. I leave you united in the strong bonds of family love, with an abiding sense of the Heavenly Father's protecting care: what more can I ask or desire?

"To-night we will have prayers before the little ones go up-stairs."

If Dr. Gordon's voice trembled, as he read in his family for the last time for months, — for, indeed, who could tell how long? — no one could wonder; but it rose strong and clear as he commended his family and himself to God in earnest prayer. And when they all united in singing the hymn beginning, —

> "Father, I know that all my life
> Is portioned out to me,"—

some voices trembled with emotion, while his was unwavering. It was one of those rare occasions, when all the strings of the family harp vibrate in unison. Even the youngest felt the solemn joy that comes from the uplifting of the heart in earnest communion with its Maker; and the presence of God was experienced in that little household band as a sustaining and elevating power.

"Good-night must be good-by to most of you, my darlings, as I leave early in the morning."

"Not to me, papa," said Hannah.

"Nor to me, as I am to see you off," said Jack.

"And please let me go too?" said Charlie pleadingly.

"Very well; come, Ella, you must loosen those little arms, and give papa one more kiss."

But the child clung to him with all the strength of her little clasping arms, sobbing bitterly, and could only be persuaded to release him by her mother's saying, "You hurt dear papa, darling."

"*No, no*, papa hurt Ella, papa go away and never see Ella again;" but she loosed her hold, kissed him again and again, and then, sliding down from his knee, put her hand in Hannah's, and so left the room.

When Hannah came back, she found her father alone, lying back in his chair, pale and tired.

"She has sobbed herself to sleep, little darling," was Hannah's answer to his inquiry about Ella. "I don't wonder. How *shall* we do without you?"

"Bravely, I don't doubt. I trust much to you, Hannah, and I can do it far better than I could a few months ago. You will find all the sunshine you can, I know, for mamma and the rest; and, if clouds do come, remember their mission is always a needful one. For the rest, keep up good courage, and take care of yourself."

At first it seemed to the family as if matters never could settle into the new routine after Dr. Gordon left. None of the children could remember his having ever been absent from home more than a week at a time, and that at very long and rare intervals. Without his quick, springing step, his pleasant, cheery voice, his strong, bright presence, the house seemed desolate indeed.

Mrs. Gordon was very calm and quiet; Hannah spasmodically cheerful, occasionally indulging in a good cry when alone at night; Jack unusually still; Charlie more intensely practical than ever; while the little ones wandered from room to room, and out into the stable and garden, as if seeking for something

they couldn't find. Sam would now and then call out "Papa;" and even the little prince would look around, as if in want of some one to fill up the measure of content to his baby-life that was now so joyous.

A friend had taken Derby while the doctor was gone; the large gates were fastened up; and everywhere, within and without, the void was felt. For a time the doctor's bell would occasionally ring out in the middle of the night, the summoner being some one who had not heard of his departure.

But at last, as people learn to do when they *must*, the family settled into the new order of things, with at least an outward seeming of cheerfulness, — an outward seeming which became a feeling within also, upon hearing, as they did, encouraging news from husband and father.

"If," he wrote, "any of my dear ones are disposed to look upon this parting as hard to be borne, I must tell them what I did not dare to do before, — that my health was in a state

so critical that my very life seemed dependent upon an entire change. Now I gain perceptibly, and I hope soon to feel new life in my veins."

CHAPTER XIV.

"THE GIRLS."

IN order to follow more connectedly Hannah's life at this period, we must go back a little to the time preceding and following her father's departure from home. She had returned from the seashore in fine health and buoyant spirits. She had enjoyed a great deal, and she enjoyed it all over again with her friend Helen, with whom she spent many a pleasant hour, talking of their mutual experiences by seashore and mountain.

Lydia Harris sometimes joined them; and in her descriptions of beautiful scenery, and the delight it had given her, Hannah realized the great pleasure she had been the means of giving one whom she both loved and esteemed.

"You know," said Lydia, one day, when

they were together, "Mr. Percy wanted us to write a composition last winter upon the line, —

'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,' —

and we did. I wish I could write one *now*; for I believe never, while I live, shall I forget the solemn beauty and grandeur of mountain scenery. It seemed to me, if I lived there always, I should never be tormented and harassed as I sometimes am here in Wellwood, by petty affronts and idle words. I could not help thinking, while we were so many feet above the level of the sea and of our ordinary lives, we were miles upward towards God and Christ."

"Yet the 'world' and 'the girls' were there," said Helen. "Mr. and Mrs. Blake, Anna and Lester Blake, and others of that 'ilk,' came with as much finery as could well be put upon them: I don't include Mr. Blake, though; for mamma says his whole presence is a protest against the frivolity of his wife and daughter and son. But she is the stronger in will, and hence rules."

"Yes," said Lydia, laughing; "and there

was another set of people so intent upon their jewels and dresses that it almost seemed as if they had decked themselves out to rival the mountains in their attractions. But they made a poor show, with all their sheen and glitter and rustle, beside the woods with their varied hues of green, the lovely wild flowers under our feet, the rose and gold and purple of the clouds, and the brooks and ponds which gleamed up from the valleys below like diamonds."

"Brava!" said Hannah; "*you* shall have the class poem, if we have one, Lydia; but did these people see none of the beauties you describe?"

"I do not know, — yes: I did hear one of them say to another one evening, when our party were standing dumb with the glory of a gorgeous sunset, 'My! Sabriny, isn't them clouds pretty?' To which 'Sabriny' answered, 'Ye-es, I suppose so: I was jest thinkin' how nice that purple there would match my plaid indy silk.'"

Helen and Hannah laughed heartily at this instance of the different way in which people

look at things; and Hannah exclaimed, "I didn't know you could be so severe, Lydia."

Lydia blushed, and answered, "I didn't mean to be severe. I only repeated what I heard. Mother often tells me I must be careful and not put so much expression into my looks and tones, when I am speaking of any thing that touches me in any way."

"For my part," said Hannah, "I wish one could live in a mountain or seaside atmosphere all the time. I'm degenerating, girls, sadly since I got home. When I had nothing to do but amuse Sammy, Jack, and myself, and enjoy the exhilarating air of the sea, I found it very easy to do right, and be obliging; but, dear me! since we came home, and work and regular duties are the order of the day, I'm not half as good. And the worst of it is, mamma and papa both seem to think I've gained a victory over those old faults of mine; and that makes me feel like a poor miserable hypocrite."

"I don't see why you need to feel so," said Lydia; "you have gained a victory over your-

self, or you would not be so sensitive about any omission to do right."

"Need or not need, I do feel just so; and I wish I had Frank at my elbow to call me a silly little goose, when I am so silly as to care for these tormenting girls."

"Oh!" said Helen, "it's 'the girls,' again: is it?"

"Yes. Flora and Anna came to see me yesterday, to ask me to join a very select class in dancing, 'Madame Radoux is getting up. Such a good opportunity,' Flora said, 'to get the finishing touches in grace of deportment, which no one but a true professor of her art, like madame, *could* give. Do tease your mamma to let you go,' she ended with. I said I should like to join the class very much, and would ask mamma. Mamma looked very grave, and told me, that, aside from the expense, which we could ill afford to meet for any mere accomplishment, she should object strongly to putting a child of hers under Madame Radoux's guidance, even in 'finishing touches.' She knew of a class of little girls

in the city whom madame had taught, and that really, unless one wished their children trained to be professional ballet-dancers, her style would be hardly desirable."

"Yes, I know," said Helen, "I heard of Mrs. Hall's little girls, one of them no older than your Emma, who were taught to balance themselves on one foot extending the other on a level with their waist, and to perform similar feats of suppleness and skill. There was a public exhibition, or public to 'five hundred friends,' to which my Aunt Lucy went. She said she was perfectly shocked to see those little children making such a display of themselves, and that she was sure it must detract from all true delicacy of feeling."

"Mamma told me pretty much the same; and though she didn't think Madame Radoux half as much to blame as the mothers who sat and looked on every day, and who spent a great deal of time and money in dressing their children in airy and fantastic costumes, still of course she objected to my joining the class."

"Speaking of the expense," said Helen, "Aunt Lucy told mamma that Uncle Edward said that their costume was 'so beautifully less,' it must at least have the merit of being inexpensive. But do finish your story, Hannah."

"Well, I must own, that, though I knew mamma was right, I couldn't bear to go back and tell the girls I couldn't go; but do it I must, and so I told them mamma didn't think it best, and that I was very sorry.

"'Well you may be sorry,' Flora exclaimed. 'One don't get such a chance once in a hundred years to acquire ease and grace of motion. I never saw any one so supple as little Elise Grafton. If she had been a big girl, now, one would have hardly liked to see the feats she performed; but for a little thing, you know, it didn't matter.'

"'La!' said Anna, 'I dare say that's the reason, after all, Mrs. Gordon won't let Hannah join. She would say, as the good old line has it,—

"As the twig is bent, so the tree's inclined,"—

and that big girls would do what they did as little girls: wouldn't she, Hannah? Poor thing!' she went on, without giving me a chance to speak, 'you'll have to get up an order of recluses, with strict vows of abstinence from all follies of dress and amusement. By the way, are you to join the band of waiters at the fair?'

"Yes, I answered, I was to help Aunt Maria at her table.

"'Mrs. Howard? why, that is where we are to be: what shall you wear?' asked Anna.

"I told her that no strict uniform was required, except a white or light dress and white apron, a shoulder-knot of red, white, and blue, and a wreath of autumn leaves, and that I should wear my white brilliant.

"'And I,' replied Anna, 'shall have a new dress. Papa'll get me one fast enough, if I tell him I want it for the soldiers' fair. I'll have it trimmed with Cluny lace, I tell you, and enough of it too, and I'll wear cherry ribbons.'

"'And I,' said Flora, 'shall wear my white

spotted muslin, with the blue heading to the flounce, and a blue sash.'"

"Was that all?" said Helen, as Hannah paused: "nothing so very terrible in that."

"No, not quite all, but all I care to tell. The rest is too foolish to repeat, and too foolish for me to care about; but still I do."

"The rest," and the "unkindest cut of all," was this. As the girls were leaving, Anna turned, and said, "I'm sorry conscientious scruples prevent your joining our class. I'm surprised that mamma should let you help at the fair, so exposed, you know, and there's sure to be lots of young fellows there; but, as long as Howard Grey is away, I suppose you don't care. Sly puss, to be so dreadful proper, and have a beau after all, so young as you are!"

"I don't know what you mean," said Hannah, flushing scarlet. "Howard and I have known each other since we were little children; have always played, and enjoyed ourselves, together. He is Frank's friend, and my friend; and, as for that word 'beau,' I hate it. As if girls like us must have beaux!"

"I have waked you up at last," said Anna; "guilty conscience, you know. I'm sure it's a feather in your cap; so you needn't be so vexed, if we do all know it."

"There's nothing to know," retorted Hannah. "My father says, of all the follies of the present day, that of calling every boy, who chances to be civil and friendly to a girl, her beau, he thinks the most intolerable, destroying all the natural freedom and pleasure they would otherwise take in each other's society."

"Oh! we all know Dr. Gordon has very sensible views upon most matters; but all the world is against him in this respect. We've as good a right to our beaux as our elder sisters: have we not?" said Flora to Anna.

"Certainly: Eva has a dozen or more, and is proud of it too; and I'm sure I shouldn't be ashamed of Howard Grey, though he is a little old-fashioned in his dress. Good-by, dear: indignation is very becoming."

"It *is* too bad," thought Hannah, tears coming into her eyes in spite of herself. "They'll

talk just so to Howard, and all our good times'll be over.

"I'm sure it will take away half my pleasure serving at the table, to be with these girls. I do wish Aunt Maria didn't care quite so much about having stylish-looking girls to help her."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SOLDIERS' FAIR.

AUNT MARIA, herself what was called a very elegant woman, did care about having stylish-looking girls as aids; but she knew that there were other attractions for many of the expected visitors to the fair, and that the freshness and simple naturalness of her niece would win regard where style and fashion would have no effect.

"You look very nicely, my dear," she said to Hannah, as she presented herself at an early hour, on the morning of the fair, "as fresh as a June rose after a shower. Your hair looks well, too, despite of the lack of the bag behind. After all, it *is* absurd for every woman and girl to dress after one fashion, whatever their own appearance and style of looks may be.

"You must make the change for me, my dear. I know you are quick at figures; and I don't believe either of those giddy girls know how to take thirty-seven cents from a dollar."

"There you do them injustice, Aunt Maria. Flora is quicker at figures than I am."

"Well, if she is, her mind is more likely to be intent upon beaux than dollars and cents. When you are tired, let me know, and I'll test Miss Flora."

But patiently Hannah stood, and made change for the other table-tenders, without a word of complaint, through most of the morning. At last her aunt turned suddenly towards her, and, noticing that her cheeks were burning with a color that rivalled the most brilliant hue in her wreath, she said, "I forgot all about you, you poor, patient child; and I know you have a dreadful headache by your looks. Anna and Flora have been off three or four times to get ice-creams or something else, and you have never left the table once."

"I should like to rest awhile, Aunt Maria. I'll be back in an hour, or sooner, if my head

cools off. A little cold water and a seat will do me a great deal of good."

"Miss Flora," said Mrs. Howard, "will you take that poor child's place? You must attend to your duties, if you do."

"Never fear for me. Two dollars eighty-seven cents did you say, ma'am, is to be taken from five dollars? Eighty-seven and three are ten,—I mean ninety, and ten are one hundred, and that makes four dollars. Here it is, ma'am,—one dollar and thirteen cents. *Do* be still, Charlie!" in an aside to a lad of some fifteen years, who was mischievously following her reckoning, while a young exquisite of twenty stood by, twirling his lavender kids, and waiting for his change.

"One dollar and thirteen cents change after taking two eighty-seven from five dollars!" said Mrs. Howard, impatiently. "Mr. Ray will hardly believe that you are, as Hannah says, one of Mr. Percy's best scholars in mathematics."

"I beg your pardon, I am sure," said Flora, who had the grace to blush. "I was thinking of something else."

"Oh, it is not of the slightest consequence!" simpered the young man: "no one could expect *you* to confine your mind to the drudgery of computing change."

Half an hour's more trial, with two or three similar mistakes on Flora's part, quite exhausted Mrs. Howard's patience, — a commodity of which she never had a large stock; and, saying to Flora, "You seem quite too fatigued to attend to your work: you can go and *rest* a while," she beckoned to Lydia Harris, who was just then at leisure, and said, "Lend me your head, Lydia, till Hannah comes back. I'm just at the busiest part of the day; and these girls are fit for no figures but show-figures. Bless me! what is the matter now?"

This exclamation was caused by a crash, and shouts of laughter from a group of children, near the toy-table. Flora was making her way out, and, in so doing, her sash, or the lace upon it, had caught in a jumping-jack; and, in pulling that after her, a china mug, marked "Good girl," in gilt letters, a match-

safe, and two or three grotesque figures in china, were thrown to the ground. Flora was walking off, unconscious that the jumping-jack was still hanging to her sash, while the children laughed louder than ever; and one adventurous urchin ran after her with "Hallo, miss! did you know you'd got another bob to your kite?"

Hannah, meantime, had gone to sit down quietly for a while behind her Aunt Mary's table. This table was devoted exclusively to garments that had been contributed for the use of soldiers' families. Socks, mittens, shirts, sacks, aprons, and various other useful articles, were offered for sale, at the wholesale cost of the materials, with the view of aiding poor women who had no time to make up clothing for family wear. Hannah sat leaning back, and listening with interest to the comments of the purchasers. Some were astonished and gratified to find that the articles were priced so low, and others grumbled that they were not given outright. Amongst the latter was Mrs. Ann Mahoney, who,

though not herself entitled to buy any thing, came up with a "cousin," a soldier's widow, to see that she wasn't imposed upon.

"An' this is what ye call helping the poor craythers, who fought yer battles for ye, is it? Why, I could buy the makins of that sack meself, at any store in the place, for what ye are axin for it."

"Yes," said Miss Eliott, pleasantly,—"the *makins*, but not the *making* too. You forget that."

"Sure, an' that's nothing at all: I could jist rin that same together ony time, after a day's work."

"Then you'll not buy to-day?"

"Not we, mum," with a sniff, and an elevation of her broad shoulders expressive of contempt.

But the cousin, "poor green thing," who was not yet an adept "in getting along in Ameriky, without bein' imposed on," ventured to say, softly, "Whist now, Ann dear, an' let me look at the purty sacks for the childers, they're so nice to kiver up an old gound; an'

sure I've no time for sewin' after me day's work's done."

"Come along wid yees, yer greenhorn! they ought to give yer the things outright, don't yer see?"

And so, longingly looking back, the meek little woman was dragged away by her more enlightened (?) cousin.

Hannah laughed outright at this, and said, "I must put this little scene in the account of the fair Mr. Percy wished me to give. Oh! what's all that running behind Aunt Maria's table for?"

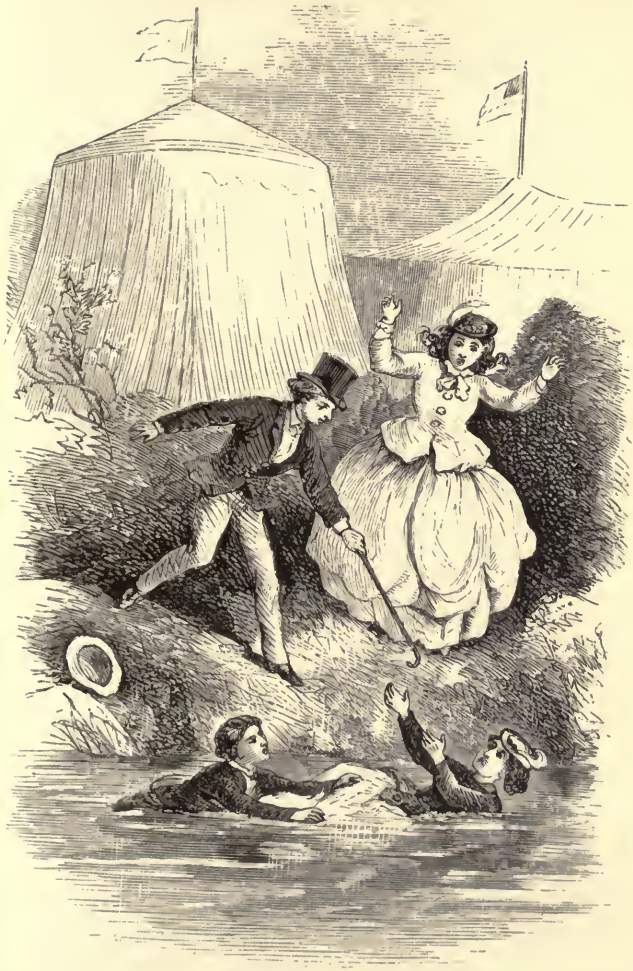
Before answering her question, it is necessary to give a little description of the spot where the fair was held. Some years previous, certain public-spirited citizens in Wellwood, prominent amongst whom was Mr Ashton, had bought two acres of land, a little out of the business part of the place, opening upon a pleasant street, and sloping back to the river, and given it to the town, upon the conditions of a large and commodious hall being erected theron, for the various uses of

fairs, lectures, concerts, &c.; that the land should be improved and made attractive, and no portion of it sold without the consent of the donors. Wellwood had increased, since that time, from a city suburb to a large town; and tempting offers had been made for the land for various building purposes. But the donors remained firm in the belief that the present interest they received from their money, in the shape of comfort and enjoyment to so many hundreds of people, was far more than the dollars and cents they would gain; and so this model hall and grove, called Beech Wood Hall, remained for the use and enjoyment of the people of Wellwood.

In the present fair, the fancy tables had most of them been arranged out of doors, while refreshments were provided in the hall. Mrs. Howard's table was not far from the river-bank; and, after Lydia took Flora's place, she and Anna sauntered to the water's edge, not at all unmindful that Mr. Ray and another young man were near by

The young men followed, and they were

soon engaged in a chat more wordy than edifying. Anna, who was resplendent in her new dress, with its puffings and rufflings, its voluminous folds, and cherry garniture, in the midst of a complimentary speech from Mr. Ray stepped upon a loose stone, which turned under her feet, and, before she had recovered her balance, slipped, and fell into the water. Flora screamed; Mr. Ray held out his cane in a most piteous manner; and Mr. Lamson, without regard to fine clothes, went after her, and, the water not being very deep, soon had her safe on dry land. But, alas! her glory for that day had departed. Drabbled and muddy, her thin skirts clinging around her hoops, the water running in streams from every puff and dangler, her *waterfall* drenching her neck, her whole appearance at once ridiculous and forlorn, she gladly stole off to the hall, by a back entrance, followed by Flora, Mrs. Howard, and Hannah. Mrs. Howard set her mind at rest, by giving Anna a good scolding, disrobing her meanwhile, and putting upon her some of the articles from Miss Eliott's table,



Before she had recovered her balance, slipped, and fell into the water. — Page 214.

upon which, that very morning, Anna had made some scornful remarks.

"What could have induced you to come here in a trim fit only for a ball-room? and, being here, why didn't you attend to your duties at the table? 'Wanted to have a good time'? Yes, that's what you girls seem to think you're made for. One would think that the whole duty of women was to flirt and dress, and amuse themselves. I thought we were to get our good time out of helping the poor disabled soldiers' families. 'Can't go home in this dress'? Then you can stay here."

"Put on my waterproof," said Hannah, good-naturedly, "and that will cover you all up. The carriage can come round to the side door, and you'll not be seen. Shall you come back?"

"If you do, I advise you to put on a thick dress," said Mrs. Howard, "and attend to your duties at the table."

"Please don't say any more," whined Anna; "it's bad enough to get wet, and cut such a figure, without being found fault with."

"You deserve a good scolding," said Mrs. Howard, laughing as if for the first time struck with the ridiculous aspect of the affair; "but I don't know but it is 'bad enough,' as you say, to be seen by your adorers in such a trim."

As Anna left the hall, Mrs. Howard added to Hannah, "What were they saying to you, a while ago, before you left the table? Something about beaux, I'll warrant."

Hannah colored, and said, "Only some nonsense about Howard Grey. I do wish, Aunt Maria, they would not talk so foolishly."

"Just as I supposed, the empty-headed creatures! To them a beau is the desideratum of life; and so they miss the free and pleasant intercourse of boys and girls, which is one of the privileges of early life. It is sickening to hear such girls talk."

"It is unkind, Aunt Maria; for they know I do not like it."

"Well, my girls are not models, as you know; but I should be ashamed of them, if they hadn't room for something else in their minds besides beaux and dress. Flora and

Anna, for Eva is not as foolish as they are, are samples of our fast young people. I wish the number was less; but I know there are still a goodly number, even in this degenerate age, who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

"Upon these our hope for the revival of the reign of common sense rests. But we must back to our duties."

The fair proved most successful, and a large sum was realized for the aid of the soldiers' families who were in want in Wellwood. Miss Eliott's table was, on the whole, well patronized by those who had work and a little ready money to spend for good and well-made articles, and was a source of profit also, as most of the material had been given, and the work either done gratuitously, or paid for by some of the richer ladies who were interested in the fair.

Hannah felt amply repaid for her fatigue in the success of the sale of the articles on her aunt's table; and on the whole, notwithstanding Anna's cold bath and consequent mortification, the fair passed off with fewer

heartburnings and unpleasant asides than is usual on such occasions.

One reason for this probably was, that all were so interested and united in the object that petty jealousies were laid aside.

CHAPTER XVI.

"GOOD-NIGHT, DARLING."

GORGEOUS-HUED autumn had given place to winter, the children were busy at school again, and the quiet routine of Dr. Gordon's household went on as best it could without the dear presence of its head, when the family were startled by another of those rude shocks which seldom come singly.

The first accounts from Dr. Gordon had been encouraging; but Nature, who is an exact creditor, never bating one jot of her just demands till the full debt is paid, would agree to no compromise: and, after the first effect of change of air had passed, Dr. Gordon was prostrated by a fever, the germs of which had, doubtless, been long in his system. At first, his kind friends wrote encouragingly, begging Mrs. Gordon to feel at ease, and assuring her

that she should be summoned, if her husband's state required it. Just as her anxiety was beginning to lessen, a message came, saying that the fever had assumed a more malignant type, and requesting Mrs. Gordon to come on immediately.

Mrs. Gordon sent Jack for Mr. Ashton and her sister Mary, and stated her determination of leaving at once, asking their advice as to sending for Frank to go with her.

"By no means," said Mr. Ashton, promptly; "that is, if you will accept me instead, as an escort. I owe my life to your husband's care, years ago; and Wellwood owes him many valuable lives for his skill and zeal last summer. It is little enough that I or any one can do for a good physician, who has done so much for us all. What! let our beloved physician languish in a distant place, and almost among strangers, and not one of his friends go to him! Consent, Mrs. Gordon, and I will make preparations to take the eight-thirty train to-morrow; or, stay! there is a night train. Can you get ready?"

"Certainly," answered Aunt Mary: "let me speak for her. Yes, she will consent to your going most gladly, I know, as I surely do."

"Good-morning, then. Keep up good courage, Mrs. Gordon: I feel that our mission will not be in vain;" and, with a cordial shake of the hand, he hastened away.

To while away, in idleness or doubtful amusements, a few weeks of God's precious time, requires, as we all know, long preparation and great expense; but when a crisis in life comes, and we are summoned to the sick or dying, a few hours suffice for all that is needed to be done. Before night, Mrs. Howard and Miss Eliott had finished Mrs. Gordon's packing, and necessary arrangements had been made about the children.

Aunt Mary was ready to shut up her own little cosey establishment, and keep house for her sister; while Mrs. Howard said that she would look after Aunt Mary, and see that she was faithful to her charge, — an offer that Charlie, in his inability to see a joke, was highly indignant at.

Hannah would not leave her mother for a moment; and, though it was the hardest effort she had yet made at self-control, she was able to keep down her choking sobs till the door had closed upon her, and the sound of the carriage-wheels had died away. Then she gave vent to a burst of grief so overwhelming, that all Aunt Mary's efforts were powerless to soothe her; and it was not till Jack, putting his arms round her, said, "Don't, Hannah, don't cry so: what shall we do if you give way?" that she was able to check, in any degree, her sorrow.

"O Jack!" she said, as soon as she could speak, "I couldn't help it: I had to cry. Mamma has been going about all day so pale and still, and so sad, I know she thinks — I know she is afraid" —

"Your mother does feel very anxious about your father; but she knows, and we all know, God's will is the right will. We must try and hope for the best. Whatever happens *will* be best. We can all pray for the absent dear ones, and then, dear child, we will strive to do our duty as cheerfully as we can."

And Hannah did strive, in that trying period of her life, as she had never striven before. Aside from her grief at the enforced separation from both of her parents, and the terror that lay at her heart that her almost idolized father would be taken from her, she had her old enemies, headache and lassitude, to contend with.

A mistaken desire not to add to Aunt Mary's cares by complaints of her health kept her silent, while her pale face was attributed by her aunt to the anxiety she did not express; and, with that idea, she thought that going to school would divert her mind, and be of benefit, when, in reality, it was the worst thing for her. Miss Eliott's view of the matter was confirmed by the change in Hannah when she heard that Mr. Ashton and her mother had found her father past the crisis of his fever, and in a fair way of recovery; for her spirits rose in spite of headache and lassitude.

But Dr. Gordon, though past all present danger, was in a state so enfeebled, that Mr. Ashton had prevailed upon Mrs. Gordon to

follow the dictates of her heart, and remain with him.

. Indeed, it seemed her plain duty to do so; for he needed constant attention, and was sometimes depressed in spirits, — a most unusual condition for him to be in.

She was cheered, too, by hearing good accounts of the household band. Prince Walter had a good nurse, and Sammy knew no want if he could be with Aunt Mary.

Emma had her own peculiar fashion of being happy, and didn't seem to miss either father or mother much, provided there was any one to answer her numerous questions.

Jack and Charlie were very happy in the increased duties and responsibilites which devolved upon them while their parents were away.

As for Ella, who could not become reconciled to her father's absence, she clung to Hannah with a pertinacity that would not be overcome, if, indeed, Hannah had wished to overcome it. But she did not; for to sit with

Ella in her arms, and talk of "dear papa," was a mutual pleasure. Every night, before the "little ones" went to bed, they expected to have half an hour's chat with Hannah; and Ella, with her little arms clinging fast round her neck, would say, "Now Hanny tell us more 'bout dear papa." She would never go to bed without kissing his picture, which hung in the dining-room, and saying to it, "Good-night, dear papa. Say good-night to mamma, too, for Ella."

"What's the use of kissing a picture?" said Emma, who was very like Charlie in her practical notions of life: "'taint real papa."

"It's real papa 'nough to kiss. Ella make believe, you know; it 'most speaks too."

So time passed on to Hannah, striving and struggling, overcoming and yielding, till she sometimes felt uncertain whether she gained or lost, till midwinter came, and with it another sharp sudden blow,—so sharp and sudden that she was for a time benumbed by it, and felt that she could make no further effort in any direction.

Ella — the bright, loving Ella, to whom she gave so much of her time and thoughts —

"Up to her Father took her way."

One night Miss Eliott was awakened from her sleep by that terrible sound, which is of itself almost a death-knell to a fond heart, — the croup. She went to Ella, and found her in great suffering. All remedies were of no avail and in twenty-four hours the child "was not."

Before she had lost power of speech, she had stretched out her little arms, saying, "Dear papa;" and then looking up at her aunt, who was bending over her, she hoarsely whispered, "Tell Ella good-night darling;" the words her mother always used in bidding her good-night, and this was her last attempt at speaking.

For the first time, Hannah stood face to face with death; but it was death in a form so lovely that it had no terrors for her.

More beautiful than in life Ella lay, with her little hands crossed upon her breast, her fair curls parted off from her pure white brow,

with that wonderful beauty of expression which is so common on the faces of little children who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

"O Aunt Mary," sobbed Hannah, "how lovely she is! 'Can this be death?'"

"Yes, dear, this is death; or rather, if we could realize it, it is life.

'They are going, only going,—
Out of pain and into bliss;
Out of sad and sinful weakness,
Into perfect holiness.
Snowy brows,—no care shall shade them;
Bright eyes,—tears shall never dim;
Rosy lips,—no time shall fade them:
Jesus called them unto him.

Little hearts for ever stainless,
Little hands as pure as they,
Little feet by angels guided
Never a forbidden way!
They are going, ever going,—
Leaving many a lonely spot;
But 'tis Jesus who has called them:
Suffer, and forbid them not.'"

"But, O dear aunt Mary! it cannot be wrong to mourn for them."

"To mourn for ourselves, dear, is natural and right, if not carried to an excess; but, if you think of it, you will know that you cannot mourn for the darling."

"But papa and mamma, Aunt Mary, — they love us all so much, and Ella was always clinging to papa, loving and kissing him: how will they bear it so far away from us all?"

"Your father and mother will bear it as they bear all their trials in life. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be his name.'"

It was sad tidings for these fond and loving parents to receive in their distant home, that one link from the household chain was severed; but their true Christian faith did not desert them here, and they strove rather to dwell upon the gain to the little darling so early transplanted to her heavenly home, than upon the loss to themselves.

Still, Mrs. Gordon's heart ached, as mother's hearts only can ache, that she was not by to kiss the dear brow, and hold the little clasping hand, and hear the last words her lips

should utter on earth. Not for one moment, however, did she regret that she had decided to remain with her husband.

After the intelligence of the event came, she said to him, "I thought over *all* possibilities, when I made up my mind that my duty was here with you, and I thought of this, — that sudden disease might take from our earthly home one of our dear ones; but I left them under the kindest care, and commended them to our and their Heavenly Father, and can say even now, while this wound is sharp and deep, that I do not regret that I remained."

"I cannot be too grateful that you feel so, Margaret," said Dr. Gordon; "for I hardly know how I could have borne this alone, enfeebled, so far from you all. Ella was like a tender vine to me, and to know that these delicate tendrils are wrenched from me so quickly and sharply is a heavy grief indeed. Yet do I blush to be so unmanned while you, her mother, bear up so bravely."

"It is from the hand of the Lord" was Mrs. Gordon's reply.

As soon as Hannah recovered from the first shock of Ella's death, she wrote a long letter to her father and mother, in which she said, "There is one thing I wish to tell you about our darling, and I am sure you will not think I speak of it in a boasting spirit, but because I know it will gratify you both. No one *seemed* to miss you, dear papa, so much as Ella; and, after mamma was called away, she clung to me constantly, whenever I was in the house, and at leisure to attend to her. Sometimes, when I was very tired and had the headache, I did feel impatient, and would wish for a moment that she would go to some one else; but the feeling never lasted long, and I believe I did not give any expression to it, for she never once turned from me when she wanted comfort or petting. Dear little Ella! how she would cling to me and kiss me, and how happy she was when I talked to her about you, and told her stories that you had told me about yourself when a boy! She would clap her little hands, and say, 'Funny papa Gordon to do so,' or 'Dear papa, to be so good to poor

lame boy.' I wish you could have seen her the day I told her she might write some kisses to you. She sat down on her little footstool, put her paper on a big chair, and made her usual marks, with a dot in the middle, for fifteen minutes. Then she kissed them, every one, and asked me to 'fold the paper right up and put it in a onveller quick, Hanny, 'fore the kisses dry up.' Once she said, 'If papa wants mamma, he oughter have her, she's *so* good.' When I think how happy we have been together this winter, it is a great comfort to me; but I do miss her so much every hour that I am in the house! Emma does not miss her as I do; for she and Charlie are a good deal together now. Jack has almost outgrown him; and he seems so manly, I know you would both be pleased. Not that he isn't Jack still in his fun and spirits, but he certainly does appear changed. I wish you could have seen how pleasantly he gave up two or three skating parties, because Aunt Mary didn't feel quite safe to have him go, when she thought the ice was not strong, and once because he had a

bad cold. It was so different from last summer about the sailing party.

"I try to think your being away is good for us children, as I know it is for you both; but I shall be the happiest girl in Wellwood when you come home. Aunt Maria is as kind as she can be. I used to be afraid of her, because I thought she was always thinking more how people were dressed than any thing else; but I know better now, for no one could be kinder than she was in our sorrow about Ella.

"'Dear little angel!' she said, as she strewed over her the beautiful flowers she brought; 'her pure spirit is clothed in heavenly raiment now.'

"Only get well, dear papa and mamma, and come home to your loving children, and I do not feel as if I *could* ever have a dissatisfied feeling again."

CHAPTER XVII.

"RICH OR POOR?"

MONTHS have passed since the events occurred which were told in the last chapter, and Hannah's fifteenth birthday has come. Although her face has a happier and more peaceful expression than it has worn for a long time, she is pale and languid, and leans back in her father's chair, as if too weary to sit upright. Dr. and Mrs. Gordon have returned to the home, made dearer than ever, since, from thence, a pure spirit has been born into immortal life. Dr. Gordon has recovered his health, although not as strong and robust as in former years; and Mrs. Gordon gained greatly in vigor from rest and change.

The family are all assembled in the sitting-room, with the exception of the two youngest boys; and Aunt Mary and Aunt Maria are with them.

"I have a question to propound to you all,—a question I have discussed before, with at least two members of the family: Are we rich or poor?" said Dr. Gordon.

"Very, *very* rich in blessings without number,—rich, too, in friends and comforts," answered Mrs. Gordon, with deep feeling in her voice.

"'Very rich he is in virtues,'

I should say, papa, with Mrs. Browning, if I may say it of you," said Hannah: "what do you think, Jack?"

"Well, I suppose we all are rich in what papa and mamma would call the best riches, but not quite so rich in money as I wish we were."

"Not rich at all, as Wellwood people count riches," said Charlie, very positively. "If we were, I know I'd ask you, papa, for a window in our workroom, for a pony, for a new set of tools, for a printing-press, and, oh, a lot more things!"

"Yes, and, if I gave you the window, you'd

want blinds to it; if I gave the blinds, you'd want outside steps, and then you'd want the lumber-room added to the other. If I gave you a pony, you'd want a pony-carriage, and then a boy to take care of both.

"If you had the printing-press, you'd want an office; if you had the tools, you'd ask for a lathe; and, if you had the 'lot more things,' you'd want twenty *lots* more beside."

"Oh, no, sir! I never should be so unreasonable."

"Then you would be very unlike the rest of the world. The story of the new carpet a man bought for his wife, that cost him, in the end, twenty thousand dollars, or more, is very true to human nature in general."

"A carpet cost twenty thousand dollars?" said Charlie; "then it must have been woven in with precious stones."

"Not at all: it was simply a handsome Brussels carpet; but, when the carpet was put down, the furniture looked mean and shabby, and had to be replaced. When the drawing-room was in order, the other rooms

did not correspond; and when all was furnished throughout, lo! the house was too poor and small for such grand array, and another one had to be bought: and so the carpet cost between twenty and thirty thousand dollars."

"The man wasn't very wise," said Charlie, "or he wouldn't have kept on buying things. But he was all that better off, wasn't he, papa?"

"I doubt it, though I am unable to follow out his history. Probably his wants and his family's wants increased with the means to gratify them; so that, in point of fact, he was never a bit the richer than at first. Or, as Young has it,—

> 'High built abundance, heap on heap! for what?
> To breed new wants, and beggar us the more.'"

"Do you suppose, papa, that is a true story?"

Dr. Gordon laughed, and answered, "True enough for my purpose, which is to prove, that, if a man is not rich in small possessions and great blessings, he never will be rich;

that is, he will always have a host of unsatisfied desires, and they will grow and multiply in proportion to his means. Now, I mean to answer my own question. We have a competency, sufficient to insure most of the comforts of life, and a few of its luxuries; we have the love and esteem of dear friends; we have each of us our own special gifts and talents; we have family union and family affection; we have all the blessings God bestows alike upon the evil and good, the just and unjust; and we have," (in a lower and more tender voice), "I trust, treasures laid up in heaven, whither one of our band has preceded us. O my children! do not long too much for gold and silver, when we have treasures of so much greater value."

There was a pause, broken, at last, by Jack, who said, "And yet, papa, all the world seems striving for money: it *must* be a good thing to have."

"It *is* a good thing to have, but not the best thing, or the only thing. Still, I am not sorry to be able to tell you that I have just received

a legacy of ten thousand dollars,— not a fortune, to be sure, but a sum which will aid me in educating my children, and enable mamma to have the needed repairs made in house and furniture."

This news was received with rapture by all but Mrs. Gordon, and with various exclamations of delight from the children.

"Hurrah!" said Jack, "I'm glad for one. You can start me in business, by and by, papa, and now you needn't work so hard to send Frank to college."

"I'm *gladder!*" exclaimed Charlie. "Now I guess we shall get the window, if not the pony."

"Mamma, you can have a seamstress now when you need one, and papa can give up his night-practice" was Hannah's remark; "and" —

"Out with it, child," said her father.

"I couldn't help thinking I sha'n't care if the girls do laugh at my dress, as long as I know you are not poor. Ten thousand dollars is a good deal of money, isn't it, papa?"

"Yes, in one sense; no, in another. It will not be much, if I must dress you like a figure in a shop-window, or if mamma runs wild upon her house-improvements, or if Master Charlie has his modest list and its additions filled. It is a good deal, if we only aim to supply reasonable wants. It will give me more for my yearly charities; it will enable me, as Jack says, to send Frank to college, and to give Jack a lift, in the future, in his business, if he needs it. Charlie shall have the window in the shed, and perhaps, by and by, the tools; and you shall have a *love* of a dress when you come home, if you are rosy and fat."

"Come home? I am at home now"—

"Oh, I am before my story! one thing at a time. Mamma shall have all the money she wants, to make the old house shine. It does need paint and paper sadly, and one or two new carpets. The man I told you of, Charlie, whose carpet cost him so much, hadn't a mamma like ours to manage for him, you may be sure.

"As to you, Hannah, legacy or no legacy,

I should have sent you away this summer. I won't say a word now about study. It'll keep; and, when I do pour out my vials of wrath, you'll all be frightened; though I'm as much — more to blame than anybody. But one thing I'm resolved upon, and that is to put you upon a rigid course of mental abstinence till you are well and strong again; and so I am going to send you away for three or four months, with Aunt Mary."

"You always were an odd fellow, Frank," said Mrs. Howard; "and this is one of your oddest whims. I thought Miss Eliott represented Mind, and I Fashion, in your estimation: now, if Fashion is as empty-headed as she is supposed to be, why, to be consistent, Hannah should go with me."

"Yes, to have her poor aching head worried with the din and crowds of Newport. No, Maria: quiet, and pure air, are what she needs; and I can trust to Aunt Mary not to excite her too much."

"But the child'll die of *ennui* in that quiet Moravian town Aunt Mary proposes taking her

to; whereas, with me, she could see somewhat of the life going on at Newport, without joining in it; and there is the sea-bathing."

"Sea-air is not the air she needs. She must have absolute change. I thank you for your willingness to take her; but I cannot change my plan."

"I'm *morally certain* she'll be homesick, poor thing!"

"I hope not. Hannah, did you know that your friend Lydia was not well? Dr. Manning tells me he is anxious about her case,—not like yours, one of simple debility,—but an ugly little cough. If Mr. Percy could hear him run on about overworking brains, he would not feel very comfortable; though, as I told Manning, it's the parents, and not the teachers, who are to blame. It's a teacher's business to cultivate the ground intrusted to his care. It is not his to know all the antecedents of his scholars, their natural and inherited tendencies. Besides, in this case, it was Mr. Percy who warned Mrs. Harris that her daughter was studying too hard."

"O papa! you do not feel afraid that Lydia will not get over this? — she seems so bright and happy!"

"I fear, but I hope for the best, — I mean for what we, in our blindness, always think for the best; but there is much in her case to contend against. I tell you this, Hannah, to impress upon you the absolute necessity of giving up your studies for a long time."

"When am I to go away, papa?"

"As soon as Aunt Mary is ready."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO KINDS OF REST.

A FORTNIGHT later found Miss Eliott and Hannah comfortably settled in a quiet boarding-place in the Moravian town on the banks of the beautiful Lehigh. Hannah experienced a sense of rest and freedom from care, to which she had long been a stranger. She did not pine for home and friends, dear as they were to her; for she was too weak and exhausted to do so. Indeed, it was not till they were fairly established in their summer-home, and the pressure of all excitement removed, that Miss Eliott, or Hannah herself, knew how feeble she was.

"I am afraid," she said one day to her aunt, "that I did very wrong last winter, in not telling you how sick and miserable I felt half the time. I did not want to increase your cares, it

is true; but I thought still more, perhaps, of falling back in my class: and now — do you think, Aunt Mary, I shall ever be well, again?"

"Certainly I do, my dear; but you need long rest of mind and body. I hope, in a fortnight, you will begin to feel the benefit of this clear, pure air. You must not reproach yourself for last winter's error, but give yourself up to all healthful and pleasant influences."

Aunt Mary was right. The first week of their stay, Hannah spent most of her time lying on the bed, sometimes walking out a few steps: the second week, she was able gradually to increase her walks, until she could, with ease, go to the beautiful cemetery, high up on the bank of the Lehigh River; and this became their daily place of resort. Miss Eliott would bring with her some light work, and Hannah would sit or recline for hours under the shade of the overspreading trees, looking down upon the beautiful winding river, far below them, or over to the other bank, where

the land was low and level, upon lines of railroad, factories, and other signs of life and trade, in marked contrast with their surroundings.

"It is *good* to be here, Aunt Mary," said Hannah, one day, after a long interval of silence, "and yet so strange; it is so very quiet and peaceful. I can't help feeling sometimes, when I lie in the dreamy state I am in so much of the time, and breathe in the peace and quiet of this spot, and listen to the deadened sounds of life and work from the other side, as if I was on the border-land which lies between us and heaven. Even when I go back to the town, thickly settled as it is, with the houses so near the street, the illusion is kept up. How very unlike this place is to any I was ever in before! and how very unlike Wellwood, where one sees so much that is disagreeable, and hears so much that is shocking!"

"Others have felt as you do, my dear. I came here, some years ago, with your Uncle Walter and a dear friend of ours, who was out

of health. He used to say, this friend, just what you say; and — it *was* the border-land of heaven to him. He passed 'over the river,' which divides time and eternity, from here."

Aunt Mary paused; and her always beautiful face shone, as if she even now held sweet communion with "the friend" who had left her. Hannah asked no questions; but her quick perceptions and imagination built up, at once, a life-romance about dear Aunt Mary and this friend. She recalled a picture of a noble-looking man that she had seen in her aunt's private room; and she felt sure that the original and this friend were the same. She remembered, too, asking her aunt once if it was the portrait of one of her uncles, and that she had wondered at the quiet answer, — "Not quite."

Aunt Mary, so tender and kind, so self-sacrificing, so ready to enter into every good work, so cheerful and happy too, — she had had a romance in her life; and Hannah fell to dreaming again, and wondering how many of

the quiet, useful, happy people she knew, who were unmarried, had some such history kept fresh and green in their hearts, though buried out of sight.

After a while, Hannah said, "I am very glad you brought me here, Aunt Mary; but I should not like to live here, if I was well and strong. It seems to be just made for a resting-place."

"Yet the Moravians, who constitute the greater part of the population, are a busy, thrifty, and, in their way, active people. The spirit of their religion pervades every thing: they love peace, quiet, and order. You must have noticed the almost entire absence of intemperance and profanity in the streets, and about the public houses, and on the shore."

"Yes, indeed; and that boy, who became so impatient the other night because he couldn't get his boat loose, swore at last; but it was under his breath."

"One could bear a great deal of quiet with such pleasant accompaniments. They are

not a tame, spiritless people either. They sent their full quota of young men to the war."

At other times, Hannah would pour out to her aunt the experiences and struggles of the last year, and gained from her much comfort and aid, in her kindly words of cheer and encouragement: and so the summer months wore on, and September came; and Hannah grew quite well and strong, the color returned to her cheeks, and the spring of abounding life came back to her step.

She had, for the most part, pleasant tidings from home, though Helen Ashton wrote in a sad strain of Lydia Harris, even telling her that she must be prepared to find her greatly changed. But Hannah was not prepared for the great change which she found had taken place, when she went to see her soon after her return home.

It was not alone that she had lost flesh and strength, or that she had the fatal beauty of her insidious disease; but that her expression,

formerly sometimes defiant, was so lovely and angelic.

"Dear Lydia," said Hannah, "I didn't know that you were so sick."

"Yes, Hannah, sick unto death. No more propositions or problems, no more Latin or German, for me in this world. I am happy to go, and be at rest. I have not had a perfectly smooth life, as you know; and I have sometimes rebelled at little things, that now I see in their true light. I wanted to tell you, Hannah, that all the girls of our class have been very kind to me this summer; with one exception, that is. They have brought me delicacies and flowers and fruits."

"Yes," said Hannah, indignantly; "after stabbing you with cruel words or more cruel acts."

"Hush, hush, dear! it was thoughtlessness in most of them. They did not mean to be cruel. Do not dwell upon the past in that way, when I am gone. I want you to remember me as one who left the world in peace with all, and who rejoices, that, thus early in

life, her battle has been fought, her victory won; for," she added, raising her eyes to heaven, "I have such exceeding peace, I am sure it must be so."

In this calm and lovely spirit she passed away, leaving a sad void in her home, where she had been at once the pride and joy of her parents' hearts. Once her mother had said to her, "O Lydia! how strange it is, that you should be taken away, when your talents were so rapidly unfolding, your progress so rapid!"

"Dear mother," she answered, "do not believe that God has given any of us powers that an entrance into his kingdom will check; rather believe that there they will have more rapid development, free from the hinderances of earth."

When the funeral-services were over, the young girls of her class, who were all present, — except Anna Blake, upon whose frivolous nature nothing seemed to make an impression, — walked home together, talking of Lydia as they went.

"It is so strange," said Flora, "that Anna would not come with us! she must be a heartless girl, Eva."

"We were just as heartless once, I suppose. Mamma proposed my going to see Lydia in the summer, and carrying her fruit and flowers. I didn't want to go a bit, but I thought I would for once; and you can't tell how fasci nated I was with her, and every thing around her. The room looked so neat and pretty, and she herself was lovely: she never was pretty, you know. I thought, perhaps, she would be cold and distant, — we used to say she shut herself in a shell, like an oyster, — but no, she was very kind and pleasant; and I felt heartily ashamed of having thought it a condescension to visit her."

"Yes, I went there, once or twice; but I couldn't feel at ease. I kept wishing I had been kinder to her at school; but then she didn't belong to 'our set,' and I didn't think she cared."

"Ah, girls!" said Miss Eliott, who overheard this remark, "who made your 'set'?

Not your Heavenly Father, who is no respecter of persons."

The words were few and kindly spoken; and they sank deep into the hearts of the young girls, who were in a state to receive impressions.

CHAPTER XIX.

ANOTHER CRUST.

"ANOTHER victim to over-study," said Dr. Gordon to Mr. Percy, who came to the house that evening.

"I fear so, though I warned her parents when I perceived her danger. Perhaps I didn't see it as soon as I might, we are so prone to look at things and people in the light of our professions. Mine is, you know, to make the most of talents given me to develop."

"Of course; as I've said, parents are most in fault: our whole system is wrong, as no one knows better than myself; and yet, if Hannah had had the same tendencies to disease that Lydia had, she would not have escaped. I shudder when I think how we treat these young, growing, sensitive crea-

tures, who, with quivering nerves, are meeting the demands Nature makes upon them, in order that her gifts may be brought to perfection. At this trying period of their lives, we put them upon a course of study which would tax the brains of adults. Sometimes they are able to meet both demands; but often they are not, and the result is — such as we have seen to-day."

"Do you not overrate the evil, sir?" asked Mr. Percy. "It seems to me, such cases as Lydia's are comparatively rare."

"By no means as rare as you suppose. Too great application to study between the ages of twelve and sixteen is not always, perhaps not often, followed by such immediate results as in Lydia's case; but many a young mother who lies in her coffin owes her early death to this cause, and no one doubts that there are cases of insanity traceable to overstudy when the physical system could not bear it. We all know that some of our finest minds and noblest natures are taken from us in this way. One such lost to our country and

humanity is sufficient to arouse attention; but, believe me, they do not count by *ones*."

"But, papa," said Hannah, who was an interested listener, "I thought that you approved of girls having a thorough education, and studying the higher branches."

"I approve of girls studying any and all branches they have an aptitude for. I believe in girls' and women's rights to follow the bent Nature has given them in literature, art, or science. What I do not believe in, either as a physician or a Christian, is in crowding into three or four years the studies which should be spread over at least twice that period. And, to make a practical application of my little discourse, I cannot consent to your returning to school before next spring."

Hannah's countenance fell from its bright, earnest expression, into one of blank dismay.

"O papa! not go to school this winter, when I feel so well and strong, so equal to any thing! You cannot mean it!"

"I certainly do mean it, dear. You are well and strong apparently: I mean you shall

continue so; and I mean now at least to be consistent with my theory."

"But consider, papa,—O Mr. Percy! please tell him,—I must fall into a lower class whenever I do go back; and then I do so dearly love to study!"

"Better fall back into a lower class, my child, than fall out of the ranks of life, where you are so much loved and needed. As to Mr. Percy, I will hear if he has any thing to say."

"I have only this to say, sir, that, with your daughter's natural abilities and application, she is equal to ranking, as she has done, foremost in her class, and that I shall regret to lose her; but—"

"Oh!" said Hannah excitedly, "*please* don't say 'but,' Mr. Percy."

"I must say it in this case, painful as it is to me to say the word so disagreeable to you; *but*—I think your father is right."

Hannah's eyes filled with tears, and Mr. Percy continued: "I appreciate so fully the sacrifice you are making, Dr. Gordon, in with-

holding your daughter from the place she might take in school, that I cannot urge or even speak of my own selfish interest in the matter; and yet a teacher does not like to lose his best scholars. And, Hannah, it is only postponing your opportunities."

"Yes, sir; but oh dear! you don't know how hard it is for one to get on as far as I have done, and then give up: but of course I *must* do as papa and you think best, only" —

"Don't hesitate to say whatever you wish, dear," said Dr. Gordon.

"Only, I *did* think Mr. Percy would take my part."

Both gentlemen smiled at Hannah's earnestness; and Mr. Percy said, "I am taking your part, Hannah. If Lydia Harris had left school a year ago, and rested, she might, she probably would, have been with us now."

"And your education is not to be suspended, my dear," said her father. "You shall take lessons from your mother in domestic matters, and you shall take drawing and music lessons also. These, with large allowance of exercise,

will fill up your time; and, when spring comes, we shall have a really strong, healthy girl to send to Mr. Percy; and, if he can keep you in his school till you are twenty, I for one shall be glad."

"Mamma," said Hannah, when she was talking over this matter with her afterwards, "I mean to try and be cheerful and happy about staying at home this winter; but none of you know how hard it is. I thought I had had disappointments before; but none of them were ever quite like this, there are so many things, — love of study (for I do love it), the pleasure it gives to be with Helen and the others, and — well, I suppose a little, perhaps a good deal, of ugly pride and ambition come in too. It is hard, oh! very hard, to step down into a lower class, and be on equality with those who have always been below me."

"Yes, we know that it is; but you have lived long enough, Hannah, to feel sure that what we like most to do is not always the best for us; and, as for the ugly pride, the sooner that

is put aside, the better for you and every one. Besides, your father says you need not go back to Mr. Percy's school, if you are very averse to it. Some other arrangement can be made for you to go on with your education, if it seems best."

Hannah looked first pleased, then thoughtful; and finally an expression of indignation crossed her honest face, and she said, "That would be a mean thing for me to do, to leave Mr. Percy, whom I like so much, just because I haven't the moral courage to begin where I left off! Don't trouble about me, mamma. I shall be able to eat this crust of bread too, if I bite hard enough. Perhaps it will stick a little in my throat going down; but, after that process is over, it will be all right, I dare say. I'm not going to be your and papa's daughter, and Frank's sister, in vain."

"I'm very glad you take such a sensible view of it, Hannah; and now, as to your lessons in housework, you are soon to have a rare opportunity. Bridget wants a month's rest; and I have decided, if you are willing, to get

along without any one to supply her place, and we will do the cooking, at least all that Sarah cannot do."

"I should like that very much. I want to learn to work. I used to think all such work dreadful; but being so much with Aunt Mary has taught me better. She has only a 'little marchioness,' as Howard Grey calls her Jane, to help her; and how nice every thing is there, and how cultivated and refined she is! And now that our house is in such good order, and looks so pretty and tasteful, it will be a pleasure to keep it so. Mamma, how much good that legacy has done already! Your improvements won't eat it all up, I'm sure."

CHAPTER XX.

SIXTEEN.

THE young readers of this brief record of two years of trial and pleasure, of strife and victory, in Hannah Gordon's life, who have ever met with a disappointment similar to that related in the last chapter, will know fully how to sympathize with her feelings. It was no light cross she was called upon to bear; and it was the heavier to her, because she felt well and strong, or, as she expressed it, "equal to any thing." But two years of varied discipline, and earnest effort on her own part to improve that discipline, had not been without a marked effect upon her character. Consequently, after the first severe struggle was over, she threw herself with zeal and interest into the course marked out for her for the winter-months. During Bridget's absence.

she became initiated in the mysteries of baking, boiling, and roasting, as well as the lighter arts or accomplishments of cookery: and she kept up the knowledge acquired, by occasional practice during the winter, on the busy days which come to every household; for her mother had told her that it was very little use for her to learn any branch of art and labor, and then give it up entirely. Mrs. Gordon did not look forward to Hannah's devoting her time chiefly to such domestic pursuits; but she did wish her to have a knowledge of such, as an essential part of her education. She also made very good progress in music and drawing. She had a good deal of natural talent for the latter accomplishment; and her father promised her all the advantages he could command for her in cultivating it.

So occupied, the months sped swiftly on, and the time drew near for the spring-term of Mr. Percy's school; and, when her father asked her if she wished to attend it again, or go to some other of equal reputation, she did not hesitate a moment.

"If I thought it mean last autumn to leave Mr. Percy," she said, "when I was tingling all over with disappointment and mortified pride, I think it would be *meaner*, *meanest*, to do so now, after looking at it in the light of my 'vast experience,' gathered during the winter. There are alleviations, too, to my lot. Helen dropped the languages last autumn, and we are to go on with them together; and, as for the rest, I believe I'm equal to 'facing the situation.'"

And she was fully equal to it; for her whole air and bearing now told that she had acquired a degree of self-assurance, as far as possible removed from self-conceit, which enabled her to take her own gauge, and not be intimidated or overawed by the false pretensions or assumption of "the girls." But they had no wish to slight or annoy her now; or, rather, Eva and Flora, who had always headed the faction in Mr. Percy's school, who had embodied the ideas represented by the phrase "the girls," had no such wish; and their example was followed by the others.

A deep and lasting impression had been made upon Eva and Flora — an impression commenced with Eva by the sad and untimely death of her brother Alfred — by the consistent loveliness of the last months of Lydia Harris's life, and by the few words fitly spoken by Miss Eliott on the day of her funeral. They had both determined never knowingly again to pain by neglect, or cruel, taunting words, any one of their associates, who, though in a different social position from themselves, might possess sensitive and refined feelings; or to annoy and tease, as they had Hannah Gordon, one who only lacked wealth to make her, in many respects, their superior.

But Anna was incorrigible. She had made her choice in life, and she meant to abide by it. Dress and fashion were her gods; and to them she bowed in earnest worship. She was now seventeen, had left school, and was already launched upon a career of frivolity which would inevitably make an early wreck of her youth and beauty. But she gained what she sought for. Society opened wide arms of wel-

come to her; and that world that could not appreciate the gifts and graces of Lydia Harris, joyfully received Anna, with her appanage of wealth and fashion. But it was a limited world, after all, that received her, — the world that feeds upon fruit fair to the eye, but within filled with ashes and bitterness; a world into whose vortex we dread to think of the young, in whom centre the deepest love of our hearts and the hopes of our country for its future welfare, being drawn.

It was in reference to Anna Blake, and the world to which she belonged, that Mr. Percy said to Dr. Gordon, "Over-study is not the only or the worst evil of our day: over-dress and dissipation are doing a more fearful work still."

"That I grant," replied Dr. Gordon; "but one evil never did, or never can, palliate or excuse another. Rather because Folly, in cap and bells, or with the bravery of tinkling ornaments, chains and bracelets, bonnets and headbands, ear-rings and rings, changeable suits of apparel, mantles and wimples, crisping-pins

and fine linen, &c. &c. (I quote from memory, you perceive), thins the ranks of life, do we need still more, as a counteracting influence, clear minds in strong bodies; and these we shall *never* get, in any proportion to the wealth of material we possess in our children, until a new system of education is adopted."

Hannah was at least a convincing proof of the wisdom of her father's course, adopted almost, it is true, at the eleventh hour. Bravely putting down all false pride at being obliged to go into a lower class in school, she entered upon her studies when the spring-term commenced, with a zest and earnestness to which she had heretofore been a stranger. Study, once such a weariness to the flesh in spite of her love of it, was now a positive enjoyment; and she could easily have outstripped her class, and regained her standing in the old one, but she knew that it would not be her father's wish that she should do so: and, whatever her misgivings had been as to his correct judgment in her case, she had none now, and was prepared cheerfully to follow his

plan for the completion of her school-education. With good principles, good temper, good talents, and good health, a good career in life is before her. Is not such a career more to be desired than one of meteoric brilliancy, which flashes brightly upon the vision, and then, descending, is lost, at least to mortal view, in darkness for ever?

Aunt Maria has become a decided convert to "Frank's odd views of education" as she called her brother's ideas upon the subject, and to other odd views of his also. She always will attach, perhaps, a little undue importance to the "world" and its fashions; but she is fully convinced that life has higher claims upon her, and she, too, is striving to meet these claims.

Aunt Mary goes on in her old unobtrusive course of self-sacrifice and kindness; and, though the visions of her early youth are unfulfilled, her life is one of quiet and serene enjoyment.

Frank and Howard Grey are in college together, and theirs bids fair to be one of those

strong and lasting friendships which will endure through life, and which are so beautiful to look upon in boy and man. Neither has Hannah lost her friend; for "the girls" have learned to respect her wishes, and to give up the senseless folly which sees only a "beau" in every young lad or man.

Of Helen Ashton little remains to be said. Of an equable temperament, good constitution, and surrounded by every influence favorable to the healthy development of her powers of mind and heart, she has not only thus far escaped much of the strife which is the inevitable portion of temperaments like Hannah Gordon's, but is well armed to encounter any adverse circumstances in the future.

Mrs. Brown has kept her promise. Her home retains the "shine" our young workers gave it in their labor of love, and her own face shares in the brightness. As for Tommy, he is as happy an urchin as Wellwood limits can produce, and bids fair to be a good, industrious man.

Our story commenced with Hannah's trials,

and it is but just that it should close with her present views of them. It is her sixteenth birthday, which she has begged her mother might be celebrated by an afternoon party for Emma. Running up to the nursery, which has been repainted and papered since our first introduction to her there two years ago, and which has a bright, cheery aspect generally, she finds her father standing by the window, lost in thought as absorbing as hers had been that afternoon.

"No sober looks, papa, upon my sixteenth birthday," she said, coming up and putting her arms around him lovingly. "Do you remember my croaks about my trials two years ago, and how I used to fret and groan and sulk over them at other times? Don't you think I've learned to 'hop skip' pretty well since, as you advised me to? The mountains were mole-hills, most of them, after all. though I never felt quite sure of it till — till that winter you and mamma were away, and darling Ella left us, and I had so many real trials. O papa, I used to think my heart

would almost break. I was so sick and good for nothing, and so anxious about you."

"Poor child! it was a hard winter for you, but you did bravely, and you have done bravely these two years; and now, I hope, you will find life more full of sunshine, because you know what real grief is, and will not any longer make mountains of mole-hills."

"Sunshine! it's all sunshine, papa. I feel so well and strong and happy, and everybody at home and abroad that I care for is so good and kind. Jack,—only think, papa, how changed he is in so many ways; and Emma, who used to be so teasing and disagreeable, has improved so much; and mamma is so much stronger and brighter than she used to be. Why, the world is full of sunshine!"

"Yes, dear; and the change in Jack and Emma is owing to your patience and forbearance with them, more than any other cause. You have not striven in vain; and, in conquering yourself, you have conquered others also."

"Oh! thank you, papa, for saying that. The hardest *home* struggle I've had has been to be patient with Emma, so unlike Ella as she was and is; but she's a good, kind little girl now, and I'm very glad you and mamma let her have this party. But I cannot stop to chat even with you, papa, but must go and make my *arrangements*, as Mrs. Brown says." She danced gayly out of the room, followed by the loving and admiring eyes of her father. He may be pardoned for thinking, How lovely she is! For what is more lovely than a young girl standing on the verge of womanhood, her countenance beaming with health and happiness, her form elastic with grace and the "life she feels in every limb," enjoying with almost equal zest innocent pleasures and grave duties?

Not that all struggle was over for her; but the habit was gained, she knew who was the Way, and, thus aided, she might hope to reach the heights on heights of excellence and virtue which would rise before her as she journeyed onward.

Looking at her thus, in her innocence of heart and purity of life, Dr. Gordon said in low and reverent tones, "He that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment."

THE END.